

THE ARGOSY

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TRUE TO HIMSELF;

OR,
*ROGER STRONG'S STRUGGLE FOR
PLACE.*

BY EDWARD STRATEMEYER,
Author of "Richard Dare's Venture," etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE TROUBLE IN THE ORCHARD.

"**H**I, there, Duncan Woodward!" I called out.
"What are you doing in Widow Canby's orchard?"

"None of your business, Roger Strong," replied the only scion of the wealthiest merchant in Darbyville.

"You are stealing her pears," I went on.

"No such thing."

"But you are. Your pockets are full of them."

"See here, Roger Strong, just you mind your own business and leave me alone."

"I am minding my business," I rejoined warmly.

"Indeed!" And Duncan put as much of a sneer as was possible in the word.

"Yes, indeed. Widow Canby pays me for taking care of her orchard, and that includes keeping an eye on these pear trees," and I approached the tree upon the lowest branch of which Duncan was standing.

"Humph! You think you're mighty big!" he blustered, as he jumped to the ground.

"No, I don't, Duncan."

"Yes, you do. What right has a fellow like you to talk to me in this manner? You are getting too big for your boots."

"I don't think so. I'm guarding this property and I want you to hand over what you've taken and leave the premises," I retorted, for I did not fancy the style in which I was being addressed.

"Pooh! Do you expect me to pay any attention to that?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, I won't."

"You had better, Duncan. If you don't you may get into trouble."

"Who'll get me into trouble—you?"

"No, you'll get yourself."

"I suppose you intend to tell the widow what I've done."

"I certainly shall; unless you do as I've told you to."

Duncan bit his lip.

"How do you know but what the widow said I could have the pears," he ventured.

"If she did it's all right," I returned, astonished, not so much over the fact that Widow Canby had granted the permission, as that such a high toned young gentleman as Duncan Woodward should desire that privilege.

"You've no business to jump at conclusions," he added sharply.

"If I judged you wrongly, I beg your pardon, Duncan. I'll speak to the widow about it."

guiding influence, he had grown up wayward in the extreme.

He was a tall, well built fellow, strong from constant athletic exercise, and given, on this account, to having his way among his associates.

Yet I was not afraid of him. Indeed, to tell the plain truth, I was not afraid of any one. For eight years I had been shoved in life from pillow to post, until now threats had no terrors for me.

Both of my parents were dead to me. My mother died when I was but five years old. She was of a delicate nature, and, strange as it may seem, I am

inclined to believe that it was for the best that her death occurred when it did. The reason I believe this is because she was thus spared the disgrace that came upon our family several years later.

At her death my father was employed as head clerk by the firm of Holland & Mack, wholesale provision merchants of Newark, which was but a few miles from Darbyville.

We occupied a handsome house in the center of the village. Our family besides my parents and myself contained but one other member—my sister Kate, who was several years my senior.

When our beloved mother died Kate took the management of our home upon her shoulders, and as she had learned, during my mother's long illness, how everything should be done, our domestic affairs ran smoothly. All this time I attended the Darbyville school, and was laying the foundation for a commercial education, intending at some later day to follow in the footsteps of my father.

Two years passed, and then my father's manner changed. From being bright

and cheerful towards us he became moody and silent. What the cause was I could not guess, and it did not help matters any to be told by Duncan Woodward, whose father was also employed by Holland & Mack, that "some folks would soon learn what was what, and no mistake."

At length the thunderbolt fell. Returning from school one day I found Kate in tears.

"Oh, Roger!" she burst out. "They say father has stolen money from Holland & Mack, and they have just arrested him for a thief!"

The blow was a terrible one. I was but a boy of fourteen, and the news completely bewildered me. I put on my cap, and together with Kate, took the first train to Newark to find out what it all meant.

We found my father in jail, where he had been



"FIRST OF ALL I WANT YOU TO GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES AND APOLOGIZE TO ME FOR YOUR CONDUCT THIS MORNING."

I began to move off towards the house. Duncan hurried after me and caught me by the arm.

"You fool you, what do you mean?" he demanded.

"I'm going to find out if you are telling the truth."

"Isn't my word enough?"

"It will do no harm to ask," I replied evasively, not caring to pick a quarrel, and yet morally sure that he was prevaricating.

"So you think I'm telling you a lie? I've a good mind to give you a sound drubbing," he cried, angrily.

Duncan Woodward had many of the traits of a bully about him. He was the only son of a widower who nearly idolized him, and, lacking a mother's

placed to await the action of the grand jury. It was with difficulty that we obtained permission to see him, and ascertained the facts of the case.

The charge against him was for raising money upon forged checks, eight in number, the total amount being nearly twelve thousand dollars. The name of the firm had been forged, and the money collected in New York and Brooklyn. I was not old enough to understand the particulars.

My father protested his innocence, but it was of no avail. The forgery was declared to be his work, and, though it was said that he must have had an accomplice to obtain the money, he was adjudged the guilty party.

"Ten years in the State's prison." That was the penalty. My father grew deadly white, while as for me my very heart seemed to stop beating. Kate fainted, and two days later the doctor announced that she had a bad attack of brain fever.

Two months dragged slowly by. Then my sister was declared to be out of danger. Next the house was sold over our heads, and we were turned out upon the world, branded as the children of a thief, to get a living as best we could.

Both of us would willingly have left Darbyville, but where should we go? The only relation we had was an uncle—Captain Enos Moss—and he was on an extended trip to South America, and when he would return no one knew.

All the friends we had had before deserted us. The girls "turned up their noses" at Kate—which made my blood boil—and the boys fought shy of me.

I tried to find work, but without success. Even in places where help was wanted excuses were made to me—trivial excuses that meant but one thing—that they did not desire any one in their employ who had a stain upon his name.

Kate was equally unsuccessful; and we might have starved but for a lucky incident that happened just as we were ready to give up in despair.

Walking along the road one day I saw Farmer Tilford's bull tearing across the field toward a gate which had been accidentally left open. Widow Canby, absorbed in thought and quite unconscious of the danger that threatened her, was just passing this gate, when I darted forward and closed it just a second before the bull reached it. I did not consider my act an heroic one, but the Widow Canby declared that I was a brave boy indeed, and thanked me profusely.

She presently started on her way home, and I continued on my journey towards Newark, where I intended to make a final search for work.

On the outskirts of the city I came across a red object lying in the middle of the road. I picked it up, and found it was a pocketbook. It contained ninety dollars in bills and a card bearing the name:

HANNAH B. CANBY.

With my find tucked safely away in my jacket pocket, I hurried back to Darbyville. I found the widow much agitated over her loss, and she was overjoyed to have her money returned.

"You are not only a brave boy, but an honest one as well," she said. "Who are you?"

I told her, coloring as I spoke. But she laid a kindly hand upon my shoulder.

"Even if your father was guilty you are not to blame," she said.

Then she made me tell her all about myself, and about Kate, and the hard luck we were having.

The Widow Canby lived in an old fashioned house, surrounded on three sides by orchards several acres in extent. She was well to do, but made no pretense to style. Many thought her

extremely eccentric, but that was only because they did not know her.

The day I found her pocketbook she made me stay to supper, and when I left it was under promise to call the next day and bring my sister along.

This I did, and a long conversation took place, which resulted in Kate and myself going to live with the widow—I to take care of the garden and the orchards, and my sister to help with the housekeeping, for which we received our board and joint wages of fifteen dollars per month.

We could not have fallen into better hands. Mrs. Canby was as considerate as one would wish, and had it not been for the cloud upon our name we would have been content.

But the stain upon our family was a source of unpleasantness to us. I fully believed my father innocent, and I wondered if the time would ever come when his character would be cleared. He was still in prison, and had yet nearly ten years to serve—a period I thought would never come to an end.

My duties around Widow Canby's place were not onerous, and I had plenty of chance for self improvement. I had finished my course at the village school in spite of the calumny that was cast upon me, and now I continued my studies in private whenever the opportunity offered.

I was looked down upon by nearly every one in the village. To strangers I was pointed out as the convict's son, and people reckoned that the "Widder Canby wasn't right sharp when she took in them as wasn't to be trusted."

I was not over sensitive, but these remarks, which generally reached my ears sooner or later, made my blood boil. What right had people to look down on my sister and myself? It was not fair to Kate and me, and I proposed to stand it no longer.

It was a lovely morning in September, but I was in no mood to enjoy the bright sunshine and clear air that flooded the orchard. I had just come from the depot with the mail for Mrs. Canby, and down there I had heard two men pass opinions on my father's case that were not only uncharitable but unjust.

I was therefore in no frame of mind to put up with Duncan Woodward's actions, and when he spoke of giving me a good drubbing I prepared to defend myself.

"Two can play at that time, Duncan," I replied.

"Hol hol! Do you mean to say you can stand up against me?" he asked derisively.

"I can try," I returned stoutly. "I'm sure now that you have no business here."

"Why, you miserable little thief—"

"Stop that! I'm no thief, if you please."

"Well, you're the son of one, and that's the same thing."

"My father is innocent, and I won't allow any one, big or little, to call him a thief," I burst out. "Some day he will be cleared."

"Not much!" laughed Duncan. "My father knows all about the case. I can tell you that much."

"Then perhaps he knows where the money went to," I replied quickly. "I know he was very intimate with my father at that time."

Had I stopped to think I would not have spoken as I did. My remark made the young man furious.

"I'll choke you to death!" he cried, glaring at me.

"No, you won't. And let me tell you that you are a thief. You have stolen those pears, and I shall tell the Widow Canby all about you."

I had hardly spoken before Duncan hit me a stinging blow on the forehead,

and, springing upon me, bore me to the ground.

CHAPTER II.

THE ASSAULT ON THE ROAD.

I KNEW Duncan Woodward would not hesitate to attack me. He was a much larger fellow than myself, and always ready to fight any one he thought he could whip.

Yet I was not prepared for the sudden onslaught that had been made. Had I been I might have parried his blow.

But I did not intend to be subdued as easily as he imagined. The blow on my forehead pained not a little, and it made me mad "clear through."

"Get off of me!" I cried, as Duncan brought his full weight down upon my chest.

"Not much? Not until you promise to keep quiet about this affair," he replied.

"I'll promise no such thing," I retorted.

"You'd better, unless you want the worst drubbing you ever had."

"If you don't get off you'll be mighty sorry," was my reply, as I squirmed around in an effort to throw him off.

Suddenly he caught me by the ear, and gave that member a twist that caused me to cry out with pain.

"Now will you do as I say?" he demanded.

"No."

Again he caught my ear. But now I was ready for him.

It was useless to try to shake him off. He was too heavy and powerful for that. So I brought a small, but effective weapon into play.

The weapon was nothing more than a pin that held together a rent in my trousers made the day previous. Without hesitation I pulled it out and ran it a good half inch into his leg.

The yell he gave would have done credit to a wild Indian, and he bounded a distance of several feet.

I was not slow to take advantage of this movement, and in an instant I was on my feet and several yards away.

Duncan's rage knew no bounds. He was mad enough to "chew me up," and with a loud exclamation he sprang after me, aiming a blow at my head as he did so.

I dodged his arm, and then, gathering myself together, landed my fist fairly and squarely upon the tip of his nose, a blow that knocked him off his feet and sent him rolling to the ground.

To say that I was astonished at what I had done would not express my entire feelings. I was amazed, and could hardly credit my own eyesight.

Yet there he lay, the blood flowing from the end of his nasal organ. He was completely knocked out, and I had done the deed.

I did not fear for consequences. I felt justified in what I had done. But I wondered how Duncan would stand the punishment.

With a look of intense bitterness on his face he rose slowly to his feet. The blood was running down his chin and there were several stains upon his white collar and his shirt front. If a look could have crushed me I would have been instantly annihilated.

"I'll kill you for that!" he roared. "Roger Strong, I'll get even with you if it takes ten years!"

"Do what you please, Duncan Woodward," I rejoined. "I don't fear you. Only beware how you address me in the future. You will get yourself into trouble."

"I imagine you will be the one to get into trouble," he returned insinuatingly. "How so? I only hit you in self defense."

"Never mind. I said I'd get even and I will."

"I'm not afraid. But—hold up there?" For Duncan had begun to move off towards the fence.

"What for?"

"I want you to hand over the pears you picked."

"I won't."

"Very well. Then I'll report the case to Mrs. Canby."

Duncan grew white.

"Take your confounded fruit," he howled, throwing a dozen or more of the luscious pears at my feet. "If I don't get even with you my name isn't Duncan Woodward!"

And with this parting threat he turned to the fence, jumped over, and strode down the road.

In spite of the seriousness of the affair I could not help but laugh. Duncan had no doubt thought it a great lark to rob the widow's orchard, never dreaming of the wrong he was doing or of the injury to the trees. Now his nose was swollen, his clothes soiled, and he had suffered defeat in every way.

I knew he intended to take part in some tableaux at the public hall that evening, and I could well imagine what a sorry looking figure he would cut.

I had no doubt that he would do all in his power to get even with me. He hated me and always had. At school I had surpassed him in our studies, and on the ball field I had proved myself a superior player. I do not wish to brag about what I did, but it is necessary to show why Duncan disliked me.

Nor was there much love lost on my side, though I always treated him fairly. The reason of this was plain.

As I have stated, his father, Aaron Woodward, was at one time a fellow clerk with my father. At the time my father was arrested, Woodward was one of his principal accusers. Duncan had, of course, taken up the matter. Since then Mr. Woodward had received a large legacy from a dead relative in Chicago, or its suburbs, and started the finest general store in Darbyville. But his bitterness towards us still continued.

That this man knew something about the money that had been lost or stolen I did not doubt, but how to prove it was a difficult problem that I had pondered many times without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion.

I watched Duncan out of sight and then turned and walked slowly towards the house.

"Roger!"

It was Mrs. Canby who called me. She stood on the side porch with a letter in her hand.

"You want me?"

"Yes, I have quite important news," she continued. "My sister in Norfolk is very ill, and I must go to her at once. I have spoken to Kate about it. Do you think you can get along while we are gone?"

"Yes, ma'am. How long do you expect to be away?"

"If she is not seriously ill I shall be back by day after tomorrow. You can hitch up Jerry at once. The train leaves in an hour."

"I'll have him at the door in five minutes."

"And, Roger, you and Kate must take good care of things while I am gone. There are several hundred dollars locked up in my desk. I would take the money to the bank in Newark, only I hate to lose the time."

"I reckon it will be safe," I replied, "I'll keep good watch against burglars."

"Do you think you can handle a pistol?" she went on.

"I think I could," I replied with all the interest of the average American boy in firearms.

"There is a pistol up stairs in my bureau that belonged to Mr. Canby. I

"will let you have that, though of course I guess you won't need it."

"Is it loaded?"

"Yes; I loaded it last week. I will lay it out before I go. Be very careful with it."

"I will," I promised her.

I hurried down to the barn, and in a few moments had Jerry hooked up to the family turnout. As I was about to jump in and drive to the house a man confronted me.

He was a stranger, about forty years of age, with black hair and shaggy beard and eyebrows. He was seedily dressed, and altogether looked to be a disreputable character.

"Say, young man, can you help a fellow as is down on his luck?" he asked in a hoarse tone.

"Who are you?" I responded.

"I'm a molder from Factoryville. The shop's shut down, and I'm out of money and out of work."

"How long have you been out?"

"Two weeks."

"And you haven't found work anywhere?"

"Not a stroke."

"Been to Newark?"

"All through it, and everything full."

I thought this was queer. I had glanced at the Want column of a Newark newspaper and had noted that molders were wanted in several places.

The man's appearance did not strike me favorably, and when he came closer to me I noted that his breath smelt strongly of liquor.

"I don't think I can help you," said I. "I have nothing for you to do."

"Give me a quarter, then, will you?" I shook my head.

"Come, don't be mean."

"I'm not mean."

"Then give me the money. I ain't had nothing to eat since yesterday."

"But you've had something to drink," I could not help saying.

The man scowled.

"How do you know?"

"I can smell it on you."

"I only had one glass. Just to knock out a cold I caught. Come, make it half a dollar. I'll pay you back when I get work."

"I don't care to lend."

"You won't."

"No."

"Make it ten cents."

"Not a cent."

"You're mighty independent about it," he sneered.

"I have to be when such fellows as you tackle me," I returned with spirit.

"You're mighty high toned for a boy of your age."

"I'm too high toned to let you talk to me in this fashion."

"You are."

"I am. I want you to leave at once."

The tramp—for the man was nothing else—scowled worse than before.

"I'll leave when I please," he returned coolly.

I was nonplused. I was in a hurry to get away to drive Widow Canby to the station. To leave the man hanging about the house with no one but my sister Kate home was simply out of the question.

Suddenly an idea struck me. Like most people who live in the country, Mrs. Canby kept a watch dog—a large and powerful mastiff called Major. He was tied up near the back stoop out of sight, but could be pressed into service on short notice.

"If you don't go at once I'll set the dog on you."

"Huh! You can't fool me!"

"No fooling about it. Major! Major!" I called.

There was a rattling of chain as the animal tried to break away, and then a loud barking. The noise seemed to strike terror to the tramp's heart.

"I'll get even with you, young fellow!" he hissed, and running to the fence he scrambled over and out of sight.

I did not wait to see in what direction he went. Mrs. Canby was already calling me and wondering why I did not come.

As I drove to the door I could not help thinking over what had passed. Within the past hour I had got into difficulty with two people who had threatened to get even with me. What either would do I had not the slightest idea.

When I reached the porch I found Mrs. Canby bidding my sister good by. A moment more and she was on the seat. I touched up Jerry and we were off.

"It took you a long time to hitch up," the widow remarked as we drove along.

"It wasn't that," I replied.

And then I told her about the tramp.

"You must be very careful of those men," she said anxiously. "Some of them will not stop at anything."

"I'll be wide awake," I rejoined reassuringly.

It was not a long drive to the station. When we arrived there Mrs. Canby had over five minutes to spare, and this time was spent in buying a ticket and giving me final instructions.

At length the train came along and she was off. I waited a few moments longer and then drove away.

I had several purchases to make in the village—a pruning knife, a bag of feed and some groceries, and these took quite some time to buy, so it was nearly noon when I started for home.

Several times I imagined that a couple of the village young men noticed me very closely, but I paid no attention and went on my way, never dreaming of what was in store for me.

The road to the widow's house ran for half a mile or more through a heavy belt of timber land. We were jogging along at a fair pace, and I was looking over a newspaper I had picked up on the station platform. Suddenly some one sprang out from the bushes and seized Jerry by the bridle.

Astonished and alarmed I sprang up to see what was the matter. As I did so I received a stinging blow on the side of the head, and the next instant was dragged rudely from the carriage.

CHAPTER III.

THE MODELS.

I HAD been taken completely off my guard, but by instinct I tried to ward off my assailants.

But my effort was a useless one. In a trice I found myself on the ground, surrounded by half a dozen of the fastest young men to be found in Darbyville.

Prominent among them was Duncan Woodward, and I regretfully guessed that it was he who had organized the attack.

"Take it easy, Strong," exclaimed a fellow named Moran, "unless you want to be all broke up."

"What do you mean by treating me in this way?" I cried indignantly.

"You'll find out soon enough," said Phillips, another of the young men. "Come, stop your struggling."

"I'll do nothing of the kind. You have no right to molest me."

"Pooh!" sniffed Duncan. "The Models have a right to do anything."

"The Models?" I queried, in perplexity.

"That's what I said."

"Who are they?"

"The Models are a band of young gentlemen organized for the purpose of social enjoyment and to teach cads lessons that they are not likely to forget," replied Moran.

"I suppose you are the members," I said, surveying the half dozen.

"We have that honor," rejoined Barton, who had not yet spoken.

"And we intend to teach you a lesson," added Pultzer, a short, stout chap, whose father had once been a butcher.

"What for?"

"For your unwarranted attack upon our illustrious president."

"Your president? You mean Duncan?"

"Mr. Woodward if you please," interrupted Duncan loftily. "I won't have such a low bred fellow as you calling me by my first name."

"I'm no lower bred than you are," I retorted.

"Come, none of that!" cried Moran. "We all know you well. We shall at once proceed to teach you a lesson."

I could not help smiling—the whole affair seemed so ridiculous that had it not been for the rough handling I had received when pulled from the carriage, I would have considered the whole thing a joke.

"You'll find it no laughing matter," said Duncan savagely, angry, no doubt, because I did not show more signs of fear. "Just wait till we are through with you. You'll grin on the other side of your face."

"What do you intend to do with me?"

"You'll see soon enough."

"Maybe I won't wait," I suggested, as lightly as possible, though I was doing some powerful thinking.

"You'll have to," put in Pultzer, sharply.

"You have no right to detain me in this manner. I can have you arrested if I wish."

"Just try it on," said Duncan. "Who do you suppose will believe your story?"

I began to think the affair might be more serious than I had imagined. Six to one was heavy odds, and who could tell what these wild fellows would not do?

"I want you to let me go at once," I said decidedly. "If you don't it will be the worse for you."

"Not a bit of it. We intend that you shall remember this occasion as long as you live," returned Moran. "Come, march along with us."

"Where to?"

"Never mind. March!"

For reply I turned, and made a hasty jump for the carriage, intending to utilize Jerry in a bold dash for liberty. I had just got my foot upon the step and called to the horse when Moran caught me by the jacket and dragged me to the ground.

"No you don't!" he ejaculated roughly.

"There, Dunc, catch hold of him; and you, too, Ellery. We mustn't let him escape after we've watched two hours to catch him!"

In an instant I was surrounded. Now that Duncan had his friends to back him he was brave enough and held my arm in a grip of iron.

"Any one bring a rope?" went on Moran.

"Here's one," replied Ellery Blake.

"Hand it over. We had better bind his hands."

Knowing that it would be folly to resist, I allowed them to do as Moran had advised. My wrists were knotted together behind my back, and then the cord was drawn tightly about my waist.

"Now march!"

"But where to?"

"None of your business. March!"

"How about the horse and carriage?"

"They'll be O. K."

There seemed to be no help for it, so I walked along with them. Had there been the slightest chance offered to escape I would have taken it, but warned by experience, all six kept close watch over me.

Away we went through the woods that lined the east side of the road. It was bad walking, and with both my

hands behind me I was several times in danger of stumbling. Indeed, once I did go down, but the firm grasp of my captors saved me from injury.

Presently we came to a long clearing, where it had once been the intention of some capitalists to build a railroad. But the matter had drifted into litigation, and nothing was done but to build a sort of tool house and cut away the trees and brush.

The building had often been the resort of tramps, and was in a highly dilapidated condition. It was probably fifteen feet square, having a door at one end and a window at the other. The roof was flat and full of holes, but otherwise I reckoned the building was tolerably strong.

"Here we are, fellows," said Duncan, as we stopped in front of the door. "Just let go of him."

The others did as he requested. But they formed a small circle around me that I might not escape.

"Now that I have got you in a place free from interruption I intend to square up accounts with you," continued the president of the Models. "You hit me a foul blow this morning."

"You brought it on yourself, Duncan," I replied, as coolly as I could, though I was keenly interested.

"Stop! How many times have I got to tell you not to call me by my first name?"

"Well, then, Woodward, if that suits you better."

"Mr. Woodward, if you please."

"Oh, come, Dunc, hurry up," interrupted Moran. "We don't want to stay here all day."

"I'm only teaching this fellow a lesson in politeness."

"All right; only cut it short."

"See here, Moran, who's the president of this club?"

"You are."

"Well, then, I'll take my own time," replied Duncan loftily.

"Go ahead then. But you'll have to do without me," rejoined Moran, considerably provoked by the other's domineering tone.

"I will?"

"Yes. I've got other things to do besides standing here gassing all day."

"Indeed!" sneered Duncan.

"Yes, indeed!"

I enjoyed the scene. It looked very much as if there would be lively times without my aid.

"You're getting up on your dignity mighty quick, Dan Moran."

"I don't intend to play servant in waiting for any one, Duncan Woodward."

"Who asked you to?"

"Actions speak louder than words."

"I'm the president of the Models, am I not?"

"Yes, but you're not a model president."

I could not help smiling at Moran's pun. He was not a bad chap, and had he not been to a great extent under Duncan's influence he might have been a first rate fellow.

Of course, as is the fashion among men as well as boys, all the others groaned at the pun; and then Ellery broke in;

"Come, come, this will never do. Go ahead with Strong, Dunc."

"I intend to," was the president's rejoinder. "But you all promised to stick by me, and I don't want any one to back out."

"I'm not backing out," put in Moran. "I only want to hurry matters up."

There was a pause after this speech, then Duncan addressed me:

"Perhaps you are anxious to know why I brought you here?"

"Not particularly," I returned coldly.

"You're not?"

"No."
Duncan gave a sniff.
"I guess that's all put on."
"Not at all. What I am anxious to know is, what you intend to do with me."
"Well, first of all I want you to get down on your knees and apologize for your conduct towards me this morning."
"Not much!" I cried.
"You won't?"
"Never."
"It will go hard with you if you don't."
"I'll risk it."
"You are in my power."
"I don't care. Go ahead and do your worst," I replied recklessly, willing to suffer almost anything rather than apologize to such a chap as Duncan Woodward.

Besides, what had I done to call for an apology? I had certainly treated him no worse than he deserved. He was a spoilt boy and a bully, and I would die rather than go down on my knees to him.

"You don't know what's in store for you," said Duncan, nonplused by my manner.

"As I said before, I'll risk it."
"Very well. Where is the rope, boys?"
"Here you are," answered Pultzer.
"Plenty of it."

As he spoke he produced a stout clothes line, five or six yards in length.

"We'll bind his hands a little tighter first," instructed Duncan, "and then his legs. Be sure and make the knots strong, so they won't slip. He must not escape us."

I tried to protest against these proceedings, but with my hands already bound it was useless.

In five minutes the clothes line had been passed around my body from head to foot, and I was as stiff as an Egyptian mummy.

"Now catch hold and we'll carry him into the tool house. I guess after he has spent twenty four hours in that place without food or water he'll be mighty anxious to come to terms."

I was half dragged and half carried to the tool house and dropped upon the floor. Then the door was closed upon me, and I was left to my fate.

(To be continued.)

LONGEVITY OF ANIMALS.

A PERSON can be born, attain his majority, marry off his grandchildren and depart for his reward, while some of the long lived animals of the lower order are still in their verdant youth. A writer in "Our Boys and Girls"—*Philadelphia Times*—makes some guesses at the ages of these Methuselahs of the animal kingdom:

Questions often arise as to the age attained by certain animals, and perhaps it would be convenient for you to know more about some of them. Of course it is impossible to tell the exact age reached by wild animals, because we cannot obtain accurate data. It is believed, however, among East Indians, that the elephant lives about three hundred years. Instances are on record of their having lived one hundred and thirty years after being captured, though it was not possible to tell how old they were when taken.

The age of a whale is ascertained by the number and size of what we call the "whale-bones," the laminae, or scales, or certain organs in the mouth, which increase annually. If this method of computation be correct, and it is supposed to be so, whales have been known to live four hundred years.

Swans attain the age of one hundred years sometimes, and ravens live even longer than that. Some parrots live eighty years. Our domestic fowls live not longer than twelve to fifteen years.

Fishes and other water animals all live to a great age. A carp is known to have reached the age of two hundred years, and ordinary river trout thirty to fifty years.

Camels live from forty to fifty years, horses from twenty to thirty, oxen about twenty, sheep eight or nine, and dogs from twelve to fourteen.

HE PAID.

"I BELIEVE you are a carpenter," she said to the new boarder. "I am," he replied meekly. "Well," she continued, "then I suppose you can be trusted to plank down your board money."—*St. Paul Globe*.

GRACE AND STRENGTH.

Manoah's son, in his blind rage malign,
Tumbling the temple down upon his foes,
Did no such feat as yonder delicate vine
That day by day untired holds up a rose.

—T. B. ALDRICH.

BOBBY BLAKE'S IDEA.

BY JOHN RUSSELL FISHER.

TAKEN altogether, that was an odd conceit of Bobby Blake's.

He had felt it in his bones when he arose that morning, and it had impressed him so strongly by the time his chores were through with that he had very little appetite for breakfast, and actually forgot to pass his plate for the

It was considerably after banking hours when the money was paid into his hands, and Mr. Blake had no means of safely disposing of it until the bank should open the following day. So he carried it home with him and talked the matter over freely with his wife and hired man, Richard Ransom, during the evening.

Ransom had been in his service for several years, and Mr. Blake would have staked his life upon his honesty and integrity.

About eight o'clock this man announced the intelligence that his sister, who lived several miles beyond the village, had been taken suddenly ill, and had

the greatest indignation possible when informed of the daring robbery which had been committed during his absence. He was busily at work in a neighboring field when Bobby entered the barn, after watching his father off to the village.

"That man may be all right," the lad muttered, glancing off across the meadows to where he was engaged in breaking the rich fallow lands; "I wish I could think so. He ought to be, I'm sure, for no chap ever had better treatment than he has received from father. But—well, we'll just see how it all comes out."

Going back to the house Bobby sought out his mother, whom he found up to her elbows in the week's baking.

"Mother," he said abruptly, "I suppose you wouldn't like to tell a lie, would you?"

The good woman started back, and gazed at the boy as though she feared he had taken leave of his senses.

"Why, Bobby, what on earth—" she began, but Bobby interrupted her.

"Of course, I wouldn't ask you to do that, mother," he said, laughing heartily at the expression of her puzzled countenance. "If Ransom should ask for me when he comes in to dinner, I only want you to say that I will be away for the day. Will you do this for me?"

"But, Bobby, what—"

"Now, mother, no questions, please. You know that I must have a good reason, or I would not ask it of you."

"But I can't see what Ransom—" she persisted, but Bobby interrupted again.

"Of course you can't, mother. I don't mind telling you that I have an idea about the stolen money, and I only want time for carrying it out. You will do just what I ask of you, I know; so I sha'n't waste time coaxing you to promise. I will be back by dark, or shortly after."

"But, my son, there may be danger—" the mother began again, but Bobby was already out of hearing, whistling along the path to the barn, with both hands thrust deep into his trousers' pockets.

Arrived at his destination, he climbed into the hay loft and crept over to the side which commanded an unobstructed view of the hired man, as he went busily about his labors.

Here he lay down upon the fragrant hay, directly in front of a convenient knot hole, just on a level with his eyes, and prepared to do a great deal of thinking and watching at one and the same time.

Bobby had read that it was impossible for robbers to keep away for long at a time from the spot where they had hidden their ill gotten treasure, and he argued that, if Richard Ransom were really the culprit, and had concealed the money anywhere about the farm, the best way to ferret him out was to keep a continuous watch upon his movements.

The request which he had made of his mother was simply a ruse, by which to gain freedom of action, without arousing the suspicion of the man he was shadowing.

All through the long day the eyes of Bobby Blake followed every movement of Richard Ransom, but nothing occurred worthy of note, and the boy had begun to fear that, after all, nothing was to come of his watchful vigilance.

At sundown Ransom came in from the fields, and from his hiding place Bobby heard him whistling about his work while grooming and bedding down the tired farm horses.

At times the lad felt ashamed of his suspicions, and was tempted to creep down the ladder and beg his forgiveness for the wrong which he had done him, in thought, if not in deed; but at such times his idea would come back upon him with singular force, and he would set his



IN HIS HANDS THE MAN HELD THE BLACK MOROCCO POCKETBOOK.

second helping, as had been his invariable custom.

Bobby was fifteen years of age, and lived with his father, a prosperous and thrifty farmer, on one of the best quarter sections of land in the State of Connecticut.

After breakfast he followed his father out to the barn, where a somewhat peculiar conversation took place between them.

"Father," said Bobby thoughtfully, "I suppose you have discovered no clew to the two hundred dollars yet?"

"None, my boy," replied his father, a troubled expression overspreading his good natured countenance; "I suppose it is gone, and we'll just have to make the best of it, that's all."

But Bobby did not altogether agree with him, and right here was where his odd conceit came into the matter.

He said nothing, however, but quietly assisted his father to harness the well fed team of grays to the carriage, and watched him out of sight in the direction of Fairgrove, whither he went to prosecute further investigation in regard to the missing money.

"It's gone, eh?" Bobby muttered as he turned to re-enter the barn. "Yes, it's gone, there's no doubt of that, but whether it's gone for good is altogether another matter. And now for the carrying out of my original idea."

The secret of the whole matter was simply this:

Two days before, his father had returned from the village at a late hour in the evening with two hundred dollars, the price received for a number of fatted cattle disposed of to a drover at a good round figure.

sent him a message during the afternoon, requesting him to come over and spend the night with her.

Mr. Blake at once acceded to the proposition, sending a kindly message of sympathy to the invalid, and informing Richard that, if his sister was not visibly improved he might remain with her through the following day.

And from this apparently trifling incident dated the birth of Bobby Blake's idea.

He had been about the farm all the afternoon, and thought it exceedingly strange that he had failed to note the arrival of the messenger referred to. He said nothing, however, neither at that time nor afterward, but simply allowed matters to take their natural course.

Upon retiring for the night, Mr. Blake carefully locked the large sum of money in his private bureau drawer, and placed the key inside the case of a large wooden clock that stood upon it, a place where he had kept it for many years.

The next morning the key was found in the lock of the drawer, and the money was gone!

Nothing else in the room, or the house, had been disturbed. The only clew to be found was an open window, showing the mode of entrance and exit adopted by the midnight marauder.

All the following day had been consumed in fruitless search and inquiry, and now Mr. Blake had entered upon a second with the same object in view, while Bobby remained behind to carry out his original idea.

Richard Ransom had returned to the farm on the previous evening, reporting his sister much better, and expressing

teeth firmly together and redouble his watchfulness.

At last the man left the barn; but something—he never knew just what—impelled Bobby to remain there.

Two hours passed, and the barn was shrouded in midnight gloom when the lad again heard footsteps stealthily crossing the great threshing floor below.

He started up nervously, for he had almost fallen asleep, and listened eagerly.

The footsteps paused directly in front of a great wheat granary, which stood at the extreme end of the ground floor, and a moment later the lad heard the click of the padlock as it was sprung from its socket.

Bobby was wide awake now and trembling in every limb, for he well knew that the man could have no possible reason for entering the granary, which was almost empty, at that hour, save for some such purpose as the one which had been embodied in his idea.

Creeping stealthily across the fragrant hay he noiselessly gained the rude ladder, and, with the agility of a cat, descended to the floor below.

Here he paused to regain his breath and consider the next move to be taken in the singular rôle of amateur detective which he was playing.

His heart beat wildly, for Bobby was still but a mere lad in years and stature, and he knew the man whose movements he was watching well enough to realize that there might be serious danger in the undertaking should Ransom find himself cornered and likely to reap the reward of his supposed crime.

Bobby's eyes were now sufficiently accustomed to the gloom to note the fact that the door of the granary stood partly open, while Ransom was nowhere visible.

A moment later a feeble glimpse of light issued from the cracks in the granary wall, and then the lad felt assured that the moment for decisive action had arrived.

Gradually, noiselessly, he worked his way across the floor to the granary door, carefully avoiding everything that would be likely to emit sufficient sound to give warning of his proximity, his young limbs trembling violently, his heart in his mouth.

At last he stood in front of the partially open door and eagerly peered within.

His vigilance was rewarded beyond his most sanguine expectations.

Ransom stood near the center of the small apartment, in a stooping position, one plank of the floor removed at his feet, and with the identical black morocco pocketbook, which Bobby remembered so well as belonging to his father and containing the missing money, lying open in his great labor hardened hands.

The lad started so violently that it almost seemed as if the guilty man within must be apprised of his presence, while his breath came and went in great, sobbing gasps.

With a violent effort he conquered his emotion, however, and tried to think calmly upon the next move to be taken.

What was done must be accomplished without a moment's delay, as the man might turn to leave the granary at any moment, when Bobby's presence would be discovered and the game irretrievably lost.

A moment more, and then Bobby's resolution was taken.

He heard Ransom mutter: "I must take this away from here at once—this very night—or—"

Here he was interrupted by the quick grating of the key in the great padlock, and he turned with an imprecation and an ejaculation of astonishment and consternation to find himself a prisoner, with the white face of Bobby Blake peering in at him through a narrow crevice in the rude door.

By the light of a small lantern which Ransom had used in the pursuit of his nefarious investigations, Bobby noted the fact that his prisoner turned a shade paler, as he realized that his only means of exit had been suddenly cut off. He hastily concealed the tell tale pocketbook beneath his coarse blouse, and tried hard to look unconcerned and innocent.

"It's of no use, Richard," Bobby said quietly. "I have found you out at last. I will trouble you for that pocketbook, please. The quicker you hand it over, and the better you conduct yourself during the next ten minutes, the more mercy you are likely to receive hereafter."

"But, Bobby—" the guilty man began; but the brave lad cut him short.

"No denials, please. You have father's pocketbook, containing that missing two hundred dollars, and I want it—now. Pass it out through this crack, please. You had better do as I bid you, Richard, much better."

Bobby was very cool and determined now that he realized that the game was in his own hands.

With a muttered anathema, the guilty man obeyed.

He saw that his last card was played, and his only hope lay in the clemency of those whom he had wronged. There was no escaping from the granary until the padlock was removed from without.

"That's right, Richard," Bobby said, quietly, as the pocketbook was passed out through the crack in the door. "Now, I'll just trouble you to hold up your lantern while I count this money."

"It's all there," he continued, when this was accomplished.

"It is well for you, Richard, that it is. Now I will have to keep you a prisoner until father arrives. It may be an uncomfortable position, but you have no one but yourself to thank for it."

In vain the man begged and pleaded to be let off, promising all manner of reparation for the crime which he had committed; Bobby was firm as adamant.

"It was not my money, Richard," he said; "and you must receive your sentence from the man whom you have treated with such base ingratitude."

Half an hour later, Mr. Blake drove up to the barn, discouraged and sick at heart.

"Here is your money, father," Bobby exclaimed, as Mr. Blake stared at him, in his capacity of jailer, in bewildered astonishment. "The robber is locked up in the granary, awaiting your sentence for his crime."

"Richard Ransom!" Mr. Blake exclaimed, starting back as he recognized the confused and humble prisoner. "Is it possible that you have been guilty of so foul a crime?"

The guilty man made no reply, but stood sullenly awaiting the turn of events.

As briefly as possible, Bobby recounted his adventures, beginning with the birth of his original idea.

Mr. Blake listened quietly to the end, and then turned to the prisoner:

"If we let you out, Richard, will you promise to leave this part of the country at once, lead a virtuous life hereafter, and never, under any circumstances, let me look upon your face again? You have sinned too deeply to expect more at my hands."

Only too glad to be let off so easily, Ransom readily promised, and was never afterward seen in that neighborhood.

We are not quite sure, but we have a dim sort of conviction that Bobby was actually hugged by his delighted father when the missing money was placed in his hands; and we are quite positive that a portion of the sum went for the purchase of a beautiful Arabian pony, which was known in the neighborhood as, and answered to the name of, *Bobby's Idea*.

A LESSON OF LIFE.

A LONG day's journey there lay before;
I crossed the meadows at breaking morn;
I saw the road wind by hill and moor—
Beyond the hills was my distant bourne.

I thought of the greeting I should win—
What was it moaned at my feet meanwhile?
A poor old terrier, lame and thin;
I stooped and helped him over the stile.

Then would have crossed; but a dreary yelp
Arrested me, and I turned, to view
A limping poodle whose need of help
Was manifest; and I helped him too.

Of every nation and tribe are they.
Each has a fresh resistless wile;
Each says in own peculiar way;
"Just help a lame dog over the stile."

They're greyhound, Skye, Pomeranian;
They limp along in an endless file;
They're smooth or curly, they're black and tan
They all are lame and would cross the stile.

The shadows deepen o'er hill and glen,
Dim is my pathway of many a mile—
Yet will I renew my journey when
The last lame dog is over the stile.

—*Longman's Magazine.*

WITH COSSACK AND CONVICT.

A TALE OF FAR SIBERIA.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON,

Author of "*Under Africa*," "*The Rajah's Fortress*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XI.

A FORTUNATE ERROR.

ANDRE never forgot the horror of that moment when he heard from Captain Rosny's lips that his brother had just been shot. He tried to speak, but the words stuck in his throat, and then, moved by a sudden impulse, he opened the door and darted into the prison yard. He heard Captain Rosny's hoarse command to stop and then pursuing footsteps in his rear, but he only ran faster, threading his way with unerring sagacity between the buildings and dodging the Cossacks who tried to stop him.

In the south end of the prison was an open space lying between the stockade and one of the long, low buildings.

As Andre rounded the angle of this building he stopped and threw up his hands with a gesture of despair. Ranged along the wall was a file of Cossacks busily reloading their rifles, and four men were moving quietly away from the scene, bearing between them something covered with a blanket.

"Too late!" gasped Andre. "They have murdered him!"

He staggered forward a few yards, and then his progress was checked by Captain Rosny, who caught him by the arm and demanded angrily: "What does this mean? Have you taken leave of your senses, Andre?"

"They have murdered him," cried Andre. "Look! there goes his body."

"And what of it?" questioned the captain sternly. "What is Serge Masloff to you?"

The answer was just trembling on Andre's tongue, but before he could speak the officer in command of the firing squad came forward and said to Captain Rosny: "I beg your pardon, sir, but it was not Serge Masloff who was just shot. It was the assassin Jorka who murdered his guard two days ago."

"Why, how is this? The orders were to shoot him last."

"It was a misunderstanding," replied the officer regretfully. "I am sorry for the mistake. They are going to bring the other man out now."

Captain Rosny looked at the officer and then at Andre, whose joyful face showed that he understood the blunder that had been committed. "Don't bring

Masloff out now," he said to the former. "Delay the execution until further orders."

The officer turned away with a salute, and a moment later the Cossacks marched grimly off and disappeared behind an adjacent building.

Captain Rosny turned to Andre in a questioning manner. The latter had already recovered his composure and made up his mind what to do.

"My conduct may seem strange to you, Captain Rosny," he said calmly, "but not more so than this order of execution seems to me. Are you aware that Serge Masloff threw away his chance of escape last night in order to return and save my life? Lavroff would have killed me but for his interference, and that interference nearly cost Masloff his life. Now he is rewarded by being condemned to death. His only crime was trying to escape, and I can't see that he is greatly to be blamed for that. It was by pure accident that the floor of his cell caved into the tunnel. He surely was not in connivance with the other convicts. And now can you wonder that I was agitated by the report of his death? It is natural that I should feel grateful to him, and I implore you to save his life if that be possible."

Captain Rosny's face expressed the utmost astonishment as he listened to Andre's eloquent words, and it was evident that whatever suspicions he may have held, had now vanished.

"This is a strange story that you tell me," he replied, "and yet I am convinced that you speak the truth. I had no idea, Andre, that Masloff saved your life. I thought that he came back to aid Lavroff. It was dark, you remember, and I could see very indistinctly from where I was lying helpless with pain. I thought that you managed to wrest the knife from Lavroff, who fled immediately, and that Masloff then attacked you and was stabbed by your hand. And so it was really Lavroff who struck him down? If that is true Serge Masloff has been unjustly sentenced. I thought that he assaulted you with intent to kill. That was the ground of his condemnation. You know that crimes of that nature among convicts are always promptly punished by death."

"I swear to you that what I have said is true," exclaimed Andre earnestly. "It was Masloff who saved my life. He came back for that purpose, and it was Lavroff who stabbed him in revenge."

"Then Masloff shall be saved," said Captain Rosny. "I promise you that. It was indeed fortunate that my order was disobeyed, and that Jorka was led out first."

"It was the finger of Providence," replied Andre solemnly. "God willed it so."

"But tell me, how did you know that this man was Serge Masloff?" asked Captain Rosny with a keen glance at his companion, as they were walking back across the prison yard.

"I heard you speak his name," replied Andre quietly.

"Ah! yes! that is true," said the captain. "It was an error which I regretted instantly. Masloff is a famous Nihilist, you know, and we are under strict orders to keep his identity secret. On that ground I am sure that his escape was accidental. I am glad he did not get away. The affair might have cost me my position. You will say nothing about this, Andre, of course? Masloff's life will be saved, and I advise you to think no more of him. His original sentence will be carried out. I intend to start him off for the mines as soon as possible. He has been kept here too long already."

"You can rely on my secrecy," replied Andre. "It is only just that his life should be saved. I must be content with that, of course; and as you say, it will be better for me to forget the affair."

"Yes; far better," rejoined the captain. "Serge Masloff is destined to end his life at the mines, and the sooner that life ends the better for him. He deserves it, though. None can question that."

"Yes," answered Andre; "he does."

The remainder of that short walk was finished in silence. They parted at the prison office, Andre going inside, while Captain Rosny hurried off to attend to various matters which claimed his attention. They met again at dinner, when Captain Rosny informed Andre that a true statement of Masloff's case had been forwarded to St. Petersburg by telegraph, and that a reprieve had just been received.

"It is virtually a commutation," said the captain. "It amounts to the same thing. There will probably be some delay, and then I will be instructed to send Masloff on to the mines. He won't be shot. I can promise you that much. Nor will he receive a free pardon," added the captain with a quiet smile.

That night Andre slept fairly well. He was satisfied that Paul's life was safe, and though he would have given much for a farewell interview with his brother, he was too wise to ask it of Captain Rosny.

On the following morning he parted with his generous host and started on the long journey to Irkutsk in the best conveyance that his ample means could procure.

We need not follow him on the way. He encountered some vexatious delays, but reached his destination in the third week of July, and was favorably impressed by his first view of the city which was to be his future place of residence—for Irkutsk was the capital of Central Siberia, and in its shops, hotels, and dwellings, as well as in its social life, bore a marked resemblance to St. Petersburg.

Andre reported at once to Colonel Sudekin, the commander of the Ural Cossacks, and to his horror was immediately placed under arrest. This was probably done as a test, for at the expiration of a week he received the free pardon of the Czar, as well as a stern reprimand from Colonel Sudekin, and was then restored to his former rank as captain of Cossacks and assigned to Colonel Sudekin's staff.

His new duties soon caused Andre to endure his banishment lightly, and with the memory of his disgrace and suffering still fresh in his mind he resolved in future to do nothing that would imperil his honor and newly restored rank. He still continued to think of Paul, and with feelings of deep gratitude, but he realized that he could do nothing to lessen the fate of his unhappy brother.

As the brief Siberian summer wore on, exiled parties passed through Irkutsk every few days, and when September had come and gone Andre felt relieved to think that Paul had by this time left Irkutsk behind and was probably toiling hard on the Czar's gold mines at Kara. It was better for both, he reasoned, that they had not met.

Of course this was but a mere surmise on Andre's part. Let us see if he was correct in supposing his brother—or the person he believed was his brother—to have passed through Irkutsk previous to the month of September.

The events that succeeded the escape of Valbort—who was not retaken—and the death of Lavroff, seemed like a dream to Donald Chumleigh. He had already been informed of his destined execution on the morning of the day that witnessed the shooting of the assassin Jorka, and the news of his reprieve which reached him that night was like the breath of life to one already dead, for he had abandoned hope and resigned himself courageously to the inevitable.

The delay at St. Petersburg proved

far longer than even Captain Rosny had anticipated. For six long dreary weeks Donald remained in solitary confinement, seeing no one but the guard who brought him food and drink. The hope of obtaining an interview with the young Russian officer whose life he had saved, sustained him during a portion of his confinement, but when days passed into weeks and even his guard refused to exchange words with him, he lost this slight consolation and concluded that a Russian was incapable of feeling gratitude. The future now held no glimmer of hope, and he found himself wishing at times that the sentence of death had been carried out. Why it had been suspended he knew not.

But early in August Captain Rosny was informed that the case of Serge Masloff had been fully considered, and that the circumstances warranted a permanent suspension of the death sentence. He was instructed to forward the prisoner to the mines of Kara in accordance with his former sentence.

As this order included no provision for special transport, Captain Rosny was obliged to carry out his instructions in the usual way.

One crisp August morning, at day-break, an exile party nearly two hundred in number filed out of the gateway of the Tomsk prison attended by a large force of Cossacks, and started eastward along the dreary Siberian highway—a direction in which thousands go every year who never return.

With this exile party went Donald Chumleigh.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE MARCH.

NOW for the first time Donald experienced the full measure of his wretchedness. Dressed in a gray convict suit, with shaven face and manacled limbs, he plodded stolidly along with that unfortunate band of which he formed a part.

A squad of Cossacks in their dark green uniforms always rode in front. Then came the disorderly throng of men and women—criminals of the worst grade many of them—marching between thin, broken lines of soldiers. A string of *telegas* followed, bearing the old and sick, and the small children, and finally came a rear guard of six Cossacks escorting wagons filled with gray bags which contained the meager personal belongings of the exiles.

Progress was painfully slow, a very few miles being traveled each day. Every night they stopped at one of the exile station houses—*etapes* they are called—which line the Siberian post road at regular intervals, and every third day they rested at one of these places, which were similar to the Tomsk prison, only on a smaller scale. They were all foul and dirty beyond description, and Donald soon learned to dread these periods of rest. He would far rather have marched on from day to day. Each prisoner was allowed a daily sum equivalent to five cents, and with this he purchased such food as could be obtained from peasant women along the way. It was often hard to get—and of poor quality at that.

Donald avoided all intercourse with his companions. There was none of whom he cared to make a confidant, and to avoid forced attentions he affected ignorance of the Russian tongue. He was constantly on the lookout for some high official to whom he might appeal for a hearing, but the weeks passed into months and still the hoped for chance did not come. He frequently saw Russian officers at a distance, but was never close enough to hail them.

The 1040 miles that separated Tomsk from Irkutsk were usually covered by an exile party in about three months, and in this case very fair progress was made

during August and the first half of September.

The weather continued fine and the country passed through was so beautiful that at times Donald forgot his troubles in admiration of it. Siberia is far from being the dreary and barren land that its name usually suggests. In winter it deserves its odious reputation, but the brief summer is in many parts of the country a season of surpassing beauty.

Day by day the exiles marched over wide plains carpeted with alpine roses, daisies, wild pansies, dandelions, violets, lilies of the valley, and various other flowers that made the air perpetually sweet. Sometimes the way led through forests of poplars, aspens and silver birches, and sometimes they passed villages—a cluster of quaint pagoda topped houses with a golden domed church rising from the center—from which swarmed picturesquely clad peasants, curious to see the procession of prisoners.

But in the middle of September all this was changed. The autumn rains began earlier than usual, and with them came much frost and sleet. Wet to the skin through their thin garments, the exiles trudged on day by day in mud so deep that the wagons stuck frequently, and it was no uncommon thing to cover but two or three miles between dawn and sunset.

No pen can describe the misery and suffering. Many of the prisoners died along the way, and by the beginning of October but little more than half remained alive of the band that had started from Tomsk two months before.

Donald had been permitted to retain his undergarments, and owing partly to this and partly to the faint hope that still flickered in his heart, he escaped serious illness. He sought relief from his own sorrow in the misfortunes of others, aiding the weak and infirm with his strong arm, and often carrying little children for miles at a time.

About the middle of October winter began in earnest. The weather grew bitterly cold, freezing the roads as hard as stone. Snow storms were frequent, and were often followed by rains, after which a crust formed on the snow that was strong enough for travel.

At the end of October Irkutsk was still nearly two hundred miles away.

The exile party had now reached the most lonely and desolate region that is traversed by the great Siberian road. But few habitations were seen. To the north and south lay range after range of gloomy mountains, deep ravines and gorges almost as dark by day as by night, and streams swollen by rain and snow that poured tumultuously under the frail bridges which the Siberian government had constructed along the highway. This wild and almost impenetrable region stretched clear to the Arctic seas on the north and on the south through Mongolia to the Chinese Empire. It was inhabited by packs of fierce wolves and a few tigers who were larger and more ferocious than those found in India. Small game was abundant, for no human beings lived in these dreary solitudes. The Cossacks in charge of exile parties were always glad when this section of territory was passed, and the spires of Irkutsk came in sight.

One bitter cold morning, when the snow crust was firm enough to bear a regiment, the exiles halted for their noonday lunch in an open glade surrounded by a dense forest. Close to Donald were two desperate looking criminals, Leontef and Gross by name, who had frequently made advances to him and been as often repulsed. Taking advantage of a dispute among some of the prisoners over their food, these two men made a daring break for the forest, the chains on their legs rattling furiously as they ran. The guards fired a dozen shots after them, but apparently without

effect, for the two fugitives vanished in the thick undergrowth. Half a dozen Cossacks then started in pursuit, but returned in a short time—alone.

The officer in command shrugged his shoulders. "Let them go!" he muttered. "The fools will repent of their folly. Fall in there now," he added sharply. "Forward—march!"

The exiles formed sullenly in line, cramming what food remained into their mouths, and the desolate glade which had witnessed the successful escape of Leontef and Gross was soon left far behind.

Donald wondered at the indifference shown by the soldiers, but there was really nothing unusual about it. Hundreds of exiles escape every year in this way, but hardly one in a thousand ever reaches Russia. They either perish of hunger and cold, or are retaken and severely punished for their rashness. It was only because Leontef and Gross had been of those implicated in the escape of Valbort and the digging of the tunnel in the Tomsk prison, that the Cossacks had followed them into the forest at all. Donald hardly envied the men their liberty. It was easy to guess at their fate. He did not suspect that a deeper motive than temporary freedom had prompted them to run the gauntlet of the Cossack rifles.

After a weary march of six miles a wayside post station was reached about sunset. It was a low log building, inclosed by a courtyard. Close by was one small house and a telegraph office. On each side of the road stretched a range of mountains, broken here and there by narrow valleys.

The Cossacks halted their prisoners before the gates of the station. It was too late to reach the next *etape*, and they had decided to remain here for the night. Nailed up against one of the massive gateposts was a placard covered with large printed letters.

Curiosity prompted Donald to draw near, and the Cossacks did not offer to hinder him. He read the proclamation—which was printed in Russian—with much interest.

5,000 RUBLES REWARD.

The above sum will be paid for the capture—dead or alive—of Feodor Baranok, the Nihilist assassin, who escaped from the mines of Kara in October, 1880. Said Baranok is sixty years of age, of tall and massive build, with iron gray hair and beard. He has a long purple scar across his forehead. All persons are hereby warned under penalty of death to extend no aid to the above mentioned Feodor Baranok.

TICHIMIROFF,

Governor of Irkutsk.

"I shouldn't think Mr. Feodor Baranok would sleep well at night with a price like that on his head," said Donald half aloud. "The authorities must be desperately anxious to capture him. He has been at large for a whole year now, and yet this placard has the appearance of being newly printed."

A sudden movement of the prisoners pushed Donald forward and forced him through the gates into the courtyard of the post station. The evening rations were doled out, and then the Cossacks built blazing wood fires at half a dozen different points, about which the half frozen convicts gathered eagerly. It was evident that they would have to spend the night here on the hard ground, for the limited interior of the post station was at once occupied by the Cossacks, who locked the courtyard gates and went in, leaving a scant half dozen soldiers on guard without. Donald presently saw them through the window as they sat at a lamp lit table devouring bread and meat and pouring glasses of fiery *vodka* down their throats.

As soon as darkness came on the exiles stretched themselves unconcernedly on the snowy ground, crowding as close to the fires as possible. Donald was not in

the mood for sleep. He sat down near one of the fires, with his back against a post, and gazed moodily into the glowing flames. His thoughts—which had strayed far away from the cheerless scene around him—were presently broken in by gruff voices, and, looking up, Donald saw the *starosta*—the keeper of the post station—and one of the soldiers standing on the opposite side of the fire.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GOVERNOR OF IRKUTSK.

"HOW have things gone with you, my friend Nicholas, since I last came through here?" asked the Cossack.

"Just the same," replied the *starosta* with a dubious shake of the head. "Ah! this is a wretched life, Vladimir. One sees nothing of the world. Such a position as mine is as good as being buried alive."

"It might be worse," said the Cossack. "What more could one want? A good warm bed, plenty of food and drink, a few rubles to clink together, and no worry to eat one's heart out!—that is what I would call living. If you were in my place now—" The speaker turned half angrily, half contemptuously toward the group of sleeping convicts.

"Yes; I don't envy your lot," said the *starosta*. "It would be more to my taste to live in a city—like Irkutsk, for example. Nothing worth speaking of has happened here for ten years except that affair last month, and that was bad enough, I admit."

"What affair?" questioned the Cossack with sudden interest.

"Why, the murder of Captain Degaieff on the post road near the river Angara. He was coming from Irkutsk to Tomsk in a *tarantas*, and the assassins shot him and his driver and carried off the contents of the *tarantas*—arms, ammunition and food."

"And were they never discovered?"

"No," said the *starosta*, "not a trace of them. Other strange things have happened of late between here and Irkutsk. A post station was robbed of vast quantities of food one night, and a merchant who left here for Irkutsk five weeks ago today disappeared between this and the next station, and was never heard of again."

"Why, that begins to look serious," said the Cossack. "Had I not known you so long, Nicholas Dmitry, I would say you were telling me fairy tales."

"It is the truth," said the *starosta*. "Others will tell you the same thing. I have thought sometimes," he added gravely, "that Feodor Baranok had a hand in these things. It would be just like him, you know."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the Cossack. "Baranok is dead long ago—have no fears on that. It is absurd to stick up those fresh placards every few weeks."

At this point the speakers moved a few paces from the fire and the conversation became inaudible. What he had just heard was of little import to Donald, and his mind was about to revert to its gloomy reveries again when he heard the ringing clatter of hoofs on the frosty road outside the courtyard. Then came a furious pounding on the gates, and a voice cried loudly, "Open! In the name of God, open quickly!"

Many of the exiles sat up and looked about them stupidly, startled at the unwonted disturbance. The sound reached even to the post station, and the Cossacks poured out of the doorway, forsaking their bottles and glasses for rifles. Led by the *starosta* they rushed down the yard, and in an instant the massive gates were thrown open.

The Cossacks fell back in confusion as a horseman spurred right in among them, and the *starosta* fell over a post with a shrill yell of fright.

The stranger was a powerful, broad

shouldered man with a handsome aristocratic face, waving yellow mustache and beard, and a pair of deep blue eyes. His hat and sword were gone, and the sleeve of his arm was stained with blood. With the uninjured hand he reined in his panting horse, and quickly scanned the Cossacks who surrounded him.

"Thank God that you are here," he cried excitedly. "I feared to find the station empty. Mount your horses at once and come with me. I need your help. An hour ago I was attacked by half a dozen villains in ambush near the Angara river. They killed my escort and wounded me in the arm, as you see, and now they have carried off my daughter Varia. I would have been killed had I tried to rescue her, so I made my escape and rode on to the station for help."

The utmost confusion followed these startling words. The Cossacks rode to and fro, those who had horses of their own mounting them in haste, while others made use of the baggage animals.

The exiles, who were all awake by this time, crowded close to the gates in their curiosity, and were roughly driven back. Meanwhile the handsome stranger sat on his horse and watched the preparations that were going on with apparent calmness, but his trembling hand and twitching lip told of the mental agony he was enduring.

"It is His Excellency the Governor," whispered a soldier to his companion, as they mounted their horses in front of the gate.

The stranger caught the words, low spoken as they were.

"You are right, my man," he said loudly. "I am General Tichimiroff, governor of Irkutsk, and if you rescue my daughter from these assassins you shall have one hundred rubles apiece."

A wild cheer broke from the Cossacks at this munificent offer. "We will do it, your excellency!" they shouted. "Never fear, your daughter shall be rescued."

A spasm of pain distorted the governor's face for an instant. "My child!—my poor Varia!" he muttered. "God grant that she be saved!"

Then in a voice like thunder he added: "Come on, my brave fellows. Every moment that we lose is precious. Are you ready?"

"Yes! yes! yes!" cried the soldiers, swinging their rifles in air. A brief delay followed as the *starosta* distributed a handful of torches, and then the troop of Cossacks, twenty in number, clattered out of the courtyard with General Tichimiroff at their head, and dashed at full speed over the frozen road.

As the echo of hoofs faded in the distance the four soldiers who remained behind closed the gates and stationed themselves before them. The greater part of the exiles dropped down on the snowy ground to resume their interrupted sleep, but here and there a few stood talking in low tones.

Donald moved back to his former place by the fire. He had heard everything that was said, and while he regretted the losing of the opportunity of appealing to so powerful a man as the governor of Irkutsk—a chance which under different circumstances he would have eagerly seized—he was conscious of a feeling of intense pity for the young Russian girl—he felt convinced that she must be both young and beautiful—who had fallen into the power of these desperadoes.

"I hope they will save her," he repeated over and over to himself, and then he reflected gloomily that the chances were against her rescue. It was a dark night, and how could the Cossacks hope to overtake the assassins in such a rugged, mountainous country?

For an hour Donald worried over the fate of this young girl whom he had

never seen or heard of. He grew angry at himself for his foolishness—but that made no difference. As he sat by the fire, feeling no desire to sleep, the word "Varia" seemed to spell itself out in letters of glowing flame. Varia! It was a pretty name.

The night grew longer. With the exception of Donald all the prisoners were sleeping. Down at the gates the four Cossacks smoked and chatted. The *starosta* came out of the dark station house with a lighted lantern and joined them. Outside the courtyard was the stillness of the grave. There was no sign to tell the anxious watchers how their comrades were faring in their quest.

Suddenly a sharp rat tat tat echoed on the gate. Some one was striking it from without.

"Who is there? What is the matter?" cried one of the Cossacks.

"Open the gate and let me in," came the reply in a feeble voice. "I am badly wounded."

The first knock had brought Donald to his feet instantly, and now as these words were spoken he was startled to see a head peering over the stockade at the angle nearest the gates. He rubbed his eyes and looked again, but the head had now vanished and he could not feel sure that it had not been a delusion.

The voice from without startled the Cossacks. They looked at each other in silence for an instant.

"Don't open it," said the *starosta*. "It may be a trick."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed one of the soldiers. "You are a great coward, Nicholas Dmitry."

He stepped forward quickly, lowered the heavy bar, and pulled the gate slightly open. A second later the unsuspecting Cossack was hurled violently to the ground as the framework of heavy beams flew inward on its hinges, and half a dozen dark figures tramped over his body as they pressed into the courtyard.

The *starosta* fled toward the house as fast as his trembling feet would carry him, but the three Cossacks boldly faced the intruders.

Crack! crack! rang two rifles and down went the foremost of the assaulting party with a shrill cry. But these latter had weapons, too, and they did not hesitate to use them. Crack! crack! crack! Three flashes lit up the darkness, and when the hovering smoke cleared, two Cossacks were seen struggling on the ground, while the third was making for the post station at full speed. The soldier who had been struck by the gate lay where he had fallen, too stunned to move.

The whole affair was over almost before Donald could realize what had happened. The cries of the frightened prisoners added to his confusion, and he stood irresolutely by the fire, not knowing which way to turn. "There, that's one of them," cried a harsh voice close by, and when Donald wheeled round and saw the face of the speaker which was exposed to the glow of the flames he turned suddenly pale and uttered a sharp cry of amazement.

(To be continued.)

PAYING PRODUCTS OF INVENTION.

THE mushroom fortunes of invention are fascinating to read of; but they are not all of a single night's growth—the freaks of lucky chance or happy thought. The most enduring inventions have been made after long, hard toil. A writer in the *Epoch* interestingly discusses the subject.

Hanging over the lamps in stores, houses and factories are inverted glass balls to protect the ceiling from smoke. There is apparently no simpler device than this, but the largest sum ever obtained for a small invention has been made by the one who first thought of this smoke protector. Another invention that rewarded its inventor in a princely way is the celebrated "roller skates," which have become so popular among children all over the country.

In fact, every trade, profession and em-

ployment can show hundreds of inventions, which have brought fortunes to their inventors. In agriculture the inventors have made a complete revolution. Work that was done by hand in a very laborious way dozens of years ago is now done in one third of the time by steam and machinery. Even within the memory of living farmers there has been such a transformation in their work that their methods appear antiquated and useless. Hundreds of new inventions in the same line are annually being patented, and the farming of the future will be reduced to such a science that one is unable to predict how our crops will be raised and harvested.

In the realm of machinery and manufacture the inventor is yet but entering upon his infancy. Many millions of dollars have been reaped and are to be accumulated by the inventor in machinery who understands the complicated needs of humanity. The central idea in this work is to reduce labor, expense and time to the lowest point, and so to economize in the use of material that there will be no absolute waste. To enter upon this field of invention one cannot trust to accident and happy luck, but he must first thoroughly acquaint himself with the laws of dynamics and mechanics, so that he can appreciate an improvement when it is suggested to his mind.

In what might be called domestic and novelty inventions there is required less study, discipline and experiment, and most of the so-called accidental inventions have been made in this line. A glance around the house, in the kitchen, at the clothes, and ornamental and useful novelties scattered on every side, will give a faint idea of the wide field opened to the inventor. Every house is a small museum of small inventions which have made fortunes for their inventors. The small toys and playthings, games for parlor entertainment, sporting goods, and useful pocket articles, all represent the products of the inventor's forethought and happy invention. The simplest and most universally used articles are generally the ones that have brought in the most money.

Generally speaking inventors, like poets, are born, not made. Nearly every boy can become a good mechanic or tradesman by diligent study and perseverance, but not every one can become a good inventor. If he has a "knack" for invention, study and hard work will greatly help him, and he stands a fair chance some day of succeeding as well in his chosen line as his brother playmates do in business or professional life. Invention is no longer a spasmodic work, but a legitimate branch of industry, which has its rewards and remunerations for those who follow it faithfully.

Down to the beginning of the last century men had invented very little, and many of the articles of use which they made were contrivances rather than inventions. The boat which dates back so far into history that its beginning is hardly known, was only an evolution of the log on the water, changing gradually into a raft, and then into a boat with oars and sails. Before the beginning of the second century nearly all of the articles used were the results of gradual transformation, so that no one can really call them the inventions of one particular man.

But the inventive faculty of the present age is a continuous marvel, and it is difficult to explain the cause of the wonderful impulse. Patent offices of every nation are crowded with patents, and the great strides in this direction are increasing rapidly every year. Invention is science applied, and it is characteristic of the higher civilization; but a great deal of this success is due to the patent right system of governments, and the fostering care which they exercise over this most important of industries.

TAKE TIME.

STAMMERING is a phenomenon of lack of control over certain muscles, and for its cure various systems are employed to develop and subject these muscles. As nervousness is at the root of the whole trouble, a thorough cultivation of deliberateness in speech is the simplest and the best cure, and the *Detroit Free Press* describes the process lucidly:

Draw a long breath so as to fill the lungs to their utmost extent. Divide the sentence you wish to speak into syllables, marking time for each syllable by bringing the index finger and thumb of the right hand together, or marking time with the foot. Now, here is a specimen: "Pass-me-the-bread. Good-morn-ing-ma-dame. How-do-you-do-this-morn-ing." These syllable exercises must be practiced for at least one month, then a cure should be accomplished if the patient has no deformity of the throat or larynx, and if the front teeth are sound.

There is nothing easier than this cure; it is simply to speak in syllables for one month; and is within the reach of everybody—man, woman or child.

ETHEL'S ERROR.

ETHEL—"Papa, wasn't the prophet Job the first printer?"
PAPA—"Not that I am aware of, dear."
ETHEL—"Oh dear! I thought that he was the inventor of Job printing."—*Pittsburg Bulletin*.



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THE INFLUENCE OF FLOWERS.

A LADY recently wrote to one of the newspapers describing how, when walking with a bunch of roses in her belt, a little, ill clad tot rushed up to her and eagerly pleaded for the flowers. She added that she had often noticed among the poor a very hunger for Flora's beautiful products.

Something there is in a flower that touches the hearts of most people; something that rests, something that softens one. When hard at work a flower or two on your desk will do wonders. In the pauses its soft, yet rich, color will relieve the eye; the momentary admiration that a glance at its curving petals will inspire will in a moment clear the mind of some of its fatigue; a breath of its perfume will give a sensation of pleasure that will make the work just a trifle less irksome—but a trifle that counts.

And when one is ill, how the flowers do rest tired eyes! That is indeed a beautiful charity which sends its freight of refreshing flowers into the sick chambers of the crowded city tenements.

When in a passion (let us hope it is seldom), who has tried the experiment of going into the garden and looking into the sweet rich depths of the rose bush? The result is marvelous in its celerity and completeness. Try it next time; but, better yet, prevent the necessity for the trial.

WHERE DANGER LURKS.

THOSE cheerful people who are fond of reminding us with awful impressiveness that danger constantly lurks in the highways and byways, and at every corner (if not in the middle of the block), should be made aware of a new and curious accident that is said to have recently befallen an unsuspecting lady while, in an unguarded moment, she threw aside all vigilance and precaution and began operations on a five pound box of candy.

Her teeth suddenly struck a hard substance—there was an explosion which broke several teeth and otherwise injured the lady, and subsequent examination discovered tiny bits of fulminate and of copper imbedded in the ruins. A percussion cap had found its way into the candy kettle.

The engine of the law has long been directed against the deadly ice cream manufactory, but how can we reach the horrible dangers that lurk in the delicious, but dangerous caramel?

MUSIC AND MUSCLE.

SO much has been said on the power of music over the human mind and emotions, that there is little left of the subject but repetition. Yet unique application of music as a motive power is described by Admiral Walker, whose flagship is the great new armored cruiser, the Chicago.

The admiral asserts that music helps the officers immensely to keep the crews in discipline. His broad minded views are shown when he tells how, almost every evening in the summer season, he sends the band forward to play spirited airs. The

tars are delighted; they sing and they dance in the liveliest manner, and, as the admiral truly says, they are cheered and their minds are refreshed. They work with a better will and a keener interest and any lurking sulkiness is banished at once.

Sometimes, the band is called into requisition when a particularly heavy haul is to be made. Twenty men on a rope may cause the block to creak and no more; but, start the music, and the line makes the pulley warm in no time.

The admiral's use of music is but a new application of the theory according to which on the field of battle the band is made to crash out the grand national air: at once, thousands of men with flashing eyes and heroic devotion rush forward to certain death in the cannon's belching fire.

PERHAPS THE BIGGEST YET.

NIAGARA is said to have a rival, situated in the interior of Labrador. As yet but very meager information concerning this new wonder of the western world can be obtained, as but two white men have seen it, and there are good reasons for supposing that they may have indulged in some high coloring of the facts in their description of Grand Falls, as it is called. They claim that the water falls without a break a distance of 2,000 feet, twelve times the height of Niagara.

The return of an expedition now in Labrador will be awaited with interest, in the hope that its members may bring full information regarding this stupendous cataract.

GHOSTS OF OTHER DAYS.

JUST as people were beginning to feel a delicious thrill of horror at the thought that a real ghost or spook had been located at last, it was suddenly exploded. In a New York City household pieces of coal were for days thrown about the house with great violence. Strict watch was instituted, and at last a nurse girl in the family was found to be the human ghost.

For a century or more there has been an army of people every ready to spring to arms to conquer our childish belief in ghosts and kill off for future generations the possibility of that delicious experience of shivering in the flickering firelight as in sepulchral tones is told, how at midnight, the ghost was always known to walk. The dark corners of the room seemed full of a creepy, horrible something; the striking of the clock was a thrilling shock; and, later on, we went to sleep entirely concealed by the bed clothes.

If people will keep on exposing the ghosts, that inherited belief in them that we all have in childhood will surely be lost; and who will deny that with it will disappear one of the cherished, yet fearsome delights of youth?

STANDARDS OF MEASUREMENT.

PEOPLE are fond of talking of the high civilization of the present day, but, just as the civilization of the present is far in advance of that of the patch and powder epoch of a century or more ago, so in a few generations hence our refinement of civilization may have been thrown into the shade.

It is interesting to trace the steps in the great forward march; the great inventions of the century chiefly, perhaps, characterize the advance in the near past; but, according to the great chemist, Liebig, progress is best traced in the increasing use of soap; a great writer counts the steps in steel pens; a physician claims a reliable test in the increasing number of undergarments with which civilization wraps its form. In truth, the signs are legion, but the most general and the most positive measurement of progress, is the conversion of luxury into necessity and the increase of our needs and desires. What was the luxury of the rich, becomes the habit and the need of all, as those luxuries are cheapened and brought within reach of the masses. It is indeed true that, the more we have the more we want.

JAMES K. JONES,

UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM ARKANSAS.

SENATOR JAMES K. JONES, who was lately re-elected to the United States Senate from Arkansas, is a native of Mississippi, having been born in Marshall County on September 29, 1839. His family were the owners of large plantations and it was thus possible for him to receive the benefits of a classical education. Hardly had he arrived at man's estate when the smoldering fires of the late war leaped into



JAMES K. JONES.

From a photograph by Bell, Washington.

ravaging flames. In 1861 the State of Mississippi passed an ordinance of secession and adopted the Confederate constitution.

The future Senator testified his loyalty to the cause his State had made its own by enlisting in the Confederate service as a private soldier; when the war ended he retired to his plantation to reappear in 1873 as a practicing lawyer in Arkansas. During the same year he was elected to the United States Senate of Arkansas, and was still in the Senate when the Constitutional Convention of 1874 was called.

The new Constitution and new State government having been put into operation, Mr. Jones was re-elected to the State Senate, and, in 1877 was made President of that body. Further promotion came in the form of an election to the Forty Seventh Congress (1880) and to the two succeeding terms. Again, in 1885, he was sent to Washington as a Senator of the Democratic side. His recent re-election to the Senate makes him a national legislator until 1897.

A VALUABLE PREMIUM.

ON next to the last page we reprint this week our bicycle premium offer, to which we desire to call the special attention of all new readers. Now is just the time to secure subscriptions among your friends; the reading season has commenced, a new story starts in the present issue, and Mr. Graydon's fascinating "With Cossack and Convict" was begun in No. 460. THE ARGOSY was never so valuable as it is this fall, and the attractions booked for the coming months will carry it to a still higher level of excellence. Read the bicycle offer carefully and begin forming your club. We have already sent several machines to winners.

RAISING A GREAT FLAG.

A SHORT time since a firm of bicycle manufacturers, the Overman Wheel Company, unfurled a Star Spangled Banner, of which they boast as the largest American ensign ever raised. Its dimensions are forty one feet by seventy one, which makes it as wide as two medium city houses, while its length would cover almost four fronts. A pretty feature of this raising consisted in the filling of the great flag with flowers which showered upon the heads of the spectators when it was unfurled.

HOPE.

THERE is no grave on earth's broad chart
But has some bird to cheer it;
So hope sings on in every breast,
Although we may not hear it;
And if today the heavy wing
Of sorrow is oppressing,
Perchance tomorrow's sun may bring
The weary heart a blessing.

—ANON.

The Gormorant Cruiser.

BY BURTON MELVILLE.

STRANGE and adventurous were the voyages of the merchant service in the old days early in the century—the days when ships were not, as now, safe from indignity at the hands of a superior vessel of a rival nation; when pirates infested some of the seas, and in many quarters of the globe hordes of unclad savages might be expected to swarm over the bulwarks at almost any moment. For this reason the pacific pursuit of commerce had for adjuncts cannon and shot, guns and cutlasses, and all the other appurtenances of sea warfare.

My father once sailed a voyage on a smart full rigged ship in the China trade. She was called the Indus and had an armament equal to a man of war's—indeed, I believe she was one of the vessels that had been sold to reduce the navy under the administration of President Jefferson.

On this voyage, as my father used to relate, when off the Cape de Verde Islands one of those terrible whirling waterspouts was met with, so close to the vessel that all could see the extraordinary spectacle of a huge whale overtaken, drawn out of the water and upward until his bulk broke the waterspout and its columned tons of water sank back into their native element.

But listen to my father's story of another incident of this voyage that occurred later, off the north-west coast of Africa, on their way to the Cape of Good Hope. This is the way he used to tell it.

One evening about dusk, when the order had been given to sway up the foretopsail yard, Bill Coles and Bob Grimes, who were taking in the slack thought they heard some unusual sound ahead of the ship—a kind of bellowing, hollow noise, which could hardly have been made by a porpoise.

"What's that?" said Bill Coles.
"Hallo, there!" cried Bob Grimes, looking over the rail; "what sort of a fish are you?"

By this time the ship's headway had brought the sounds abreast of the main chains, and now captain, mate and every one else heard the extraordinary noise.

"What are you and where are you?" sang out Captain Penible.

The answer that came back was certainly in human accents, though hollow enough to have come from under a drum head and wholly unintelligible.

"It's some one on a raft or something of that sort," said Captain Penible. "A man almost dead, likely enough."

He then gave orders for bringing the ship up in the wind. The yawl was lowered and Bill Coles and Bob Grimes, who had first heard the peculiar sounds, were ordered to accompany Mr. Forney, the mate.

Presently the boat went "bump!" upon something in her way and was brought up all standing. Bob Grimes was at the bow oar and the shock tumbled him backwards into the eyes of the

boat. Jumping up, he reached out for his oar and touched some faintly seen object. It was from this that the human tones were mysteriously issuing.

"It's a cask!" cried Grimes as he got hold of it and felt along the bilge to find the bung hole.

"Here, Bill," said Mr. Forney, taking up a coil of rope, "sling it in this line and we'll take it in tow."

The sailor slung the object in the rope with surprising ease and simplicity. Then they rowed back to the ship, where the cask was hoisted on board with a watch tackle hooked to a strap on the main yard.

The unheading of the cask showed its occupant to be a large man, apparently a negro. At first he was scarcely able to stand, but

Indus, then his own. Finally, making the figures 103, he pointed from these to the men who stood about him, and once more nodded towards the cask which had held him prisoner.

All these signs Captain Penible interpreted without difficulty. The stranger had been captain of a Moorish brig of war of sixteen guns; his crew had mutinied and set him adrift in the cask; they had probably turned pirates and gone on a cruise, and they numbered one hundred and three.

That night the men talked of the ferocity of the Moors—and confessed to

Sure enough, one morning there was discovered not more than two miles off a full rigged brig, sailing on a course parallel with that of the ship.

"A full rigged brig!" was the ejaculation that passed from mouth to mouth; and, as almost everything that sailed in the South Atlantic was ship rigged, the words had a deep significance.

Hassan, the Moor, was at once called on deck, and all eyes were fixed upon him as he took the captain's glass. In another moment a gesture and an exclamation told the worst. Turning fiercely about, he drew his hand vio-



STRUGGLING MADLY TOGETHER THE PIRATES WEDGED THEIR WAY UPON THE HEAD RAIL AND BOWSPRIT OF THE BRIG.

a glass of brandy and a good rubbing of his stiffened limbs soon put him in better condition.

Resorting to signs, he scratched upon the mizzen hatch a rude representation of a flag, then pointed first to that and then to himself.

"Let us see," mused Captain Penible, "a pair of shears? I believe that's what he has drawn. That's the Moorish emblem—he's a Moor!"

Then followed the shape of a full rigged brig, showing eight broadside guns, and he pointed successively at the brig, the flag, himself and the cask. He next indicated his rank by touching, first the head of the captain of the

each other that a Moorish pirate would be a serious thing to meet.

Sky and sea continued smiling, and for days together there was no necessity of starting tack, sheet or brace. Yet the boys could not help feeling that there hung about the ship a kind of gloom. Hassan, as the Moor called himself, was almost always about deck. Unable to converse in words, he would point and nod, so that his gestures told what he would ask and when he understood.

But how frequently he scanned the horizon! The image of a Moorish brig, with eight ports on a side, was constantly before his mind.

lently across his throat. His eyes flashed, and he made an involuntary motion as if feeling at his side for the sword he no longer wore.

"Beled el Gerid!" he exclaimed.

This was the name of the dreaded vessel, as he had previously managed by word and sign to communicate it to Captain Penible.

The cannon, cartridges and small arms were at once brought on deck, the round and other shot were taken out of the long boat and all things placed within easy reach. The twelve pounders were then loaded, and all four ranged at the portholes on the larboard side, while the heavily charged muskets were set against the fire rail by the mainmast.

The executive officer, obeying the captain's order, saw the ship brought on the port tack with the wind abeam, so that she headed athwart the bows of the brig, now only a quarter of a mile off. Upon this the pirate, hauling down his

Moorish flag from the fore, sent up his large black ensign at the main, and hauled by the wind. A moment and there would be a brief chance for a raking fire.

Throwing himself upon one knee Captain Penible carefully sighted the aftermost gun of the four, while the three mates attended to the others. They roared in rapid succession. At the same instant two guns of the pirate spoke and a ball crashed into the port side of the Indus and out of the starboard, while a grape shot grazed the third mate, who was carried below. But the smoke being wafted away it was joyfully found that one of the shots from the Indus had cut completely through the brig's mainmast close to the deck. The pirate was rolling heavily, as much from the recoil of her guns as from the heavy swell of the ocean. The mainmast, shot completely through, could not stand the strain.

"It's going, it's going!" cried the crew, and sure enough the spar broke with a tremendous crash.

It was only a moment when "bump" against the Indus amidships came the pirate's cutwater, while his jib-boom and bowsprit were directly over her deck. The pirates threw on board two or three grappling irons and rushed upon their own forecastle in a body in order to throw themselves over the rail of the Indus; but the grape shot from the four twelve pounders made a sudden vacancy where they stood the thickest, while the pirate, being bow on, could not reach the Indus with a single gun.

Struggling madly together the Moors wedged and shouldered their way upon the head rail and bowsprit of the brig, but it happened that one of the twelve pound charges last fired had almost shattered the bowsprit to atoms at the place where it came out between the night heads; and now the injured spar, striking sidewise against the main rigging of the Indus, gave way before the blow, breaking completely off.

The scrambling and confusion were then fearful, fully one half of the Moors going into the water. Of these few, if any, in the clashing and rolling of the vessels, were able to save themselves. However, those who remained fixed their muskets rapidly, and at length, hauling around one of their broadside guns from the bulwarks, they aimed it at the Indus by ranging it fore and aft on their own decks; just once they fired it, and with that discharge Hassan the Moor sank to the deck. Ere their gun could be reloaded, a twelve pound ball from the Indus knocked it completely from its carriage.

Soon the vessels again clashed together as they swung, and the Moors, few as they had now become, rushed for the side of the merchantman, with the desperate hope of at last boarding her and wreaking vengeance, or of dying in a hand to hand grapple. But with the smoke, the confusion, the pounding of the ship and brig, a number of them missed their foothold in the leap, and falling between the two oaken sides, were either drowned or crushed to death. The remainder, struck down by gunshot and bayonet, were almost instantly dashed from the rail and sank with their comrades.

The pirate brig was going down! The shots between wind and water had decided her fate, and she already had a heavy, lifeless roll.

Captain Penible, jumping upon the rail, saw at once how the case stood.

"They haven't a man left!" he cried. "She is settling fast, too. We must get clear of her before she goes down; but if there be treasure aboard of her I will have that first!"

The wretched scene presented on the pirate's decks would have made most of the men sick had it not been for the excitement which sustained them.

The slain lay everywhere, and they were mingled with others desperately wounded, who still lived. The latter retained all their previous ferocity, and clutched madly at weapons lying near them as the ship's crew clambered on board.

Below were found ten small kegs of silver, each weighing about two hundred pounds, which were immediately transferred to the Indus. No other treasure was found, and it was evident that the pirate had been cut off with no more than one capture.

The sailors of the Indus now pushed her clear of the forlorn brig, but the faint breath aloft was not sufficient to fill the sails, and even this entirely died out when the Canton ship was but half a mile from the scene of the battle.

By this time the Beled el Gerid almost dipped her yard arms in the water as she rolled in the light swell. Finally the sea came rushing over her fore-castle, her stern rose several feet, her foresail and foreyard disappeared, her quarter deck followed, and then all that could be seen was a great whirl, with the royal mast in the center, as that highest of the spars went swiftly down.

Upon examination it was found that the firing of the pirate had been exceedingly wretched, as the ship was but very little injured. Only one of the ship's company had a scratch, and that was the third mate, who had been grazed by a grapeshot. But one man had been killed.

It was Hassan, the Moor.

[This Story began in Number 456.]

A DEBT OF HONOR.

BY HORATIO ALGER, JR.,

Author of "Ragged Dick," "Tattered Tom," "Luck and Pluck," etc.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BRADLEY WENTWORTH TRIES TO MAKE MISCHIEF.

IF Gerald was stupefied at meeting Bradley Wentworth the latter was even more amazed at encountering Gerald.

"You here?" he exclaimed abruptly.

"Yes, sir," answered Gerald.

"Are you traveling alone?"

"No, sir. I am with an English gentleman, Mr. Noel Brooke."

"His servant. I suppose."

"No, sir; I am his private secretary."

"Private secretary! Couldn't he find a person better qualified for the position than a beardless boy from the hills of Colorado?"

"I presume he could," answered Gerald coldly, "but he seems to be satisfied with me."

"How long since you left home?"

"Two or three months."

"Do you still own the cabin in which your father lived?"

"Yes, sir."

"You had better sell it. I am ready to pay you a fair price."

"I don't care to sell it, Mr. Wentworth."

"Humph! You are very foolish."

"Perhaps so, but I shall not sell at present. Is your son well?"

This question Gerald asked partly out of politeness, partly because he wished to change the subject.

A gloom overspread the face of Bradley Wentworth. It was a sore point with him. For a moment he forgot his dislike for Gerald and answered: "My son Victor is giving me a good deal of trouble. He ran away from school more than two months ago."

"And haven't you heard from him since?" asked Gerald in quick sympathy.

"No, but I have not taken any special pains to find him."

"You will forgive him, won't you?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Wentworth with a sigh, "but I thought it best for him to reap the consequences of his folly. Perhaps I have waited too long. Now I have no clew to his whereabouts."

"Did he go away alone?" asked Gerald, interested.

"No, he was accompanied by one of his schoolmates, Arthur Grigson. He had but little money. I thought when that gave out he would come home, or at any rate communicate with me. But I have heard nothing of him," concluded Wentworth gloomily.

"I am sorry for you, Mr. Wentworth," said Gerald earnestly. "Have you a picture of Victor with you?"

"Yes," and Wentworth drew from his inside pocket a cabinet photograph of a boy whose face was pleasant, but seemed to lack strength.

"I suppose you have met no such boy in your travels," said the father.

"No, but I may do so. If so I will try to get him to go home, and at any rate I will communicate with you."

Mr. Wentworth seemed to be somewhat softened by Gerald's sympathy, but he was not an emotional man, and business considerations succeeded his gentler mood.

"Have you got with you the papers I spoke of when we parted?" he asked with abruptness.

"They are safe," returned Gerald.

"Do you carry them around with you?"

"I must decline to answer that question," answered Gerald.

"You are an impertinent boy!"

"How do you make that out?"

"In refusing to answer me."

"If it were a question which you had a right to expect an answer to, I would tell you."

"I have a right to an answer."

"I don't think so."

"Well, let that go. I will give you a thousand dollars for the papers, not that they are worth it, but because your father was an early friend of mine, and it will give me an excuse for helping his son."

"If your intention is kind I thank you, but for the present I prefer to keep the papers."

"Is the man you are traveling with rich?"

"I have reason to think he is."

"Humph!"

Bradley Wentworth walked away, but kept Gerald under his eye. Soon he saw him promenading with Mr. Brooke, and apparently on very cordial and intimate terms with him.

"The man seems to be a gentleman," reflected Wentworth, "but he can't be very sharp to let an uneducated country boy worm himself into his confidence. It doesn't suit my plans at all. I may get a chance to injure Gerald in his estimation."

Later in the day he met Noel Brooke promenading the deck.

"A pleasant day, sir," said Wentworth politely.

"Yes, sir," answered the English tourist courteously.

"You are an Englishman, I judge?"

"Yes, sir. I presume I show my nationality in my appearance."

"Well, yes. However, I was told you were English."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, by the boy who seems to be in your company."

"Gerald Lane? Yes, he is in my company."

"I know the boy."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, and I knew his father before him. He and I were young men together."

"He must have been glad to meet you. He is an excellent boy."

"I am glad you like him," said Wentworth, but there was something unpleasant in his tone that did not escape the attention of Noel Brooke.

"Don't you feel friendly to him?" he asked keenly.

"Yes, but the boy is headstrong and repels my advances."

"That is singular. He seems to be a very open, frank boy, and I have discovered nothing objectionable in him in the ten weeks we have been together."

"I am pleased to hear it, but the boy's ancestry is against him."

"What do you mean? I thought you said his father was a friend of yours."

"Yes; we were associated together in early life, but something unpleasant occurred. However, perhaps I had better not speak of it."

"You have gone too far to recede. I insist upon your continuing."

"Well, if you insist upon it I will do so. Mr. Lane was in the employ of my uncle and lost his position in consequence of getting money upon a forged check which was traced to him."

Noel Brooke looked disturbed.

"I am sorry to hear it," he said gravely.

"I presume Gerald has not mentioned the matter to you."

"No."

"Well, he could hardly be expected to do so."

"Still the boy is no worse for his father's crime."

"Unless he inherits the same tendency," said Wentworth significantly.

"I am sure he does not," said Noel Brooke warmly.

"You can't tell. I claim to be a sharp business man, but I have more than once been deceived in a man that I thought I knew well. Warren Lane seemed to my uncle and myself a thoroughly upright man, but—here he paused suggestively.

"What induced him to commit forgery?"

"Extravagant living," answered Wentworth promptly. "His salary was only moderate and did not come up to his desires."

"You surprise me very much," said Noel Brooke after a brief pause.

"I thought I should, but I felt it to be my duty to warn you against Gerald. He is probably in confidential relations with you, and he might play some dishonest trick on you. I advise you, as soon as practicable, to discharge him, and secure some one in his place on whom you can rely. I need only call your attention to the individual he is talking with at this moment. He looks like a confidence man."

Samuel Standish had again joined Gerald, and to the boy's disgust had almost forced his company upon him.

"That is a man whom we met at a hotel in Davenport, and he appears inclined to thrust himself upon us."

Bradley Wentworth shrugged his shoulders and smiled in evident incredulity.

"At any rate," he said, "I have warned you, and have done my duty."

Noel Brooke bowed slightly, but did not feel called upon to make any other acknowledgment of Mr. Wentworth's warning.

When Brooke had an opportunity he said to Gerald, "I have been talking to a man who claims to know you."

"A tall, well built man?"

"Yes."

"He recently paid us a visit in Colorado."

"Do you consider him a friend?"

"No."

"He says he knew your father in early days."

"That is true."

"And he charges your father with having committed forgery and thus lost his position."

"Was he really so base as that?" asked Gerald indignantly.
 "Then it isn't true?"
 "No; a thousand times no!"
 "I believe you, Gerald," said the Englishman promptly.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. STANDISH RECEIVES A COMMISSION.

"THANK you for your confidence, Mr. Brooke," said Gerald, "but I prefer that you should have proofs of what I say."

"It is not necessary, Gerald."
 "But I prefer that you should look over some papers that I have with me, and for which, by the way, Mr. Wentworth is ready at any time to pay me a thousand dollars."

"But why should he be willing to pay so much?" asked the Englishman in surprise.

"Because they prove that he, and not my father, committed the forgery. My father agreed to have it charged upon him at Mr. Wentworth's urgent request, in order that Wentworth might not be disinherited by his uncle."

"But your father ought not to have made such a sacrifice. Why did he do so?"

"Because Bradley Wentworth promised him twenty thousand dollars when he came into his fortune."

"Was the fortune so large, then?"
 "Over three hundred thousand dollars."

"And he came into this fortune?"
 "Yes."

"And refused to carry out his agreement?"

"Yes; he said it was absurd to expect such a liberal reward, though it brought disgrace and loss to my poor father, and finally, as I think, shortened his life."

"It should have been considered a debt of honor."

"So my father thought, but Mr. Wentworth only offered him a thousand dollars, which, poor as he was, he indignantly refused. I don't think he would have offered anything, if he had not known that my father had letters proving that he was innocent, and Wentworth himself the forger."

"Who has these papers now?"
 "I have."

"And you say Mr. Wentworth has offered a thousand dollars for them?"

"He made me that offer this very morning."

"And you declined to accept it?"
 "Yes."

"Gerald, the man seems to be unscrupulous. If he finds he cannot obtain the papers in any other way he may plot to have them stolen from you."

"I don't know but you are right, Mr. Brooke," said Gerald thoughtfully.

"Shall I advise you?"
 "I wish you would."

"When you get to St. Louis, deposit them with some safe deposit company, and carry about with you merely copies of them. Then, if they are stolen, there will be no harm done."

"Your advice is good, Mr. Brooke, and I shall follow it."

This conversation took place in their stateroom. Meanwhile, Bradley Wentworth was engaged in reflection.

"That boy means mischief, I fully believe," he said to himself. "He is of a different nature from his father. He is firm and resolute, and if I read him aright, he will never forgo his purpose, of demanding from me the sum which I so foolishly promised his father. The worst of it is, the papers he carries will, if shown, injure my reputation and throw upon me the crime of which during all these years his father has been held guilty. Those papers I must have! My security requires it."

It was easy to come to this conclusion,

but not so easy to decide how the papers could be obtained. He would gladly have paid a thousand dollars, but that offer had more than once been made, and always decidedly refused.

As Bradley Wentworth paced the deck with thoughtful brow, Samuel Standish, who was always drawn towards men whom he suspected to be wealthy, stepped up, and asked deferentially; "General, may I ask you for a light?" for Wentworth chanced to be smoking.

Bradley Wentworth paused and scanned the man who accosted him closely.

"Why do you call me General?" he asked.

"I beg your pardon, but I took you for General Borden, Member of Congress from Kentucky."

"I am not the man."

"I really beg your pardon. Perhaps, however, you will oblige me with a light all the same."

"I will. What is your name?"
 "Samuel Standish."

"Humph! I suppose you are not a member of Congress?"

"No, indeed!" laughed Standish. "I wish I were."

"Perhaps I could give a good guess as to who and what you are."

Standish looked curious.
 "Suppose you do!" he said.

Bradley Wentworth looked the man full in the face. It was a glance of sharp scrutiny, so sharp that Samuel Standish, though not a sensitive man, flushed and winced under it.

"I may be wrong," said Wentworth, "but you look to me like an adventurer."

"Do you mean to insult me?" demanded Standish, starting angrily.

"No. In fact, I rather hope that you are the sort of character I take you to be."

"I don't understand you," and Standish looked and was really bewildered.

"Only because if you are as unscrupulous as I believe you to be, I may be able to throw a job in your way."

"You may assume then that you are correct."

Wentworth laughed slightly.
 "I thought so," he said.

"I am ready for a job," went on Standish. "In fact I am hard up, and am obliged to earn money in some way."

"And are not very particular in what way."

"Well, a man must live! If I had plenty of money it would be different. Will you kindly tell me what you want done?"

"I believe I saw you talking with a boy half an hour ago."

"Yes."

"Are you acquainted with him?"

"I saw him first at the hotel in Davenport. He is in company with an Englishman, who seems to have plenty of money."

"I see. You feel more interested in the Englishman than in the boy."

"Naturally. The boy is probably poor."

"I want you to become interested in the boy."

"If there is money in it, I shall certainly feel interested in him," said Mr. Standish briskly.

"There is money in it—if you carry out my wishes."

"What are they?"

"Listen! This boy is possessed of papers—probably he carries them about with him—which properly belong to me. I have offered to buy them of him, but he refuses to let me have them."

"Of what nature are they?"

"There is a letter, and also a memorandum signed by myself, and given to his father many years ago. The father died and the boy came into possession

of them. Knowing that I wished them he holds them for a large—a foolishly large sum."

"I comprehend. How much did you say you had offered him for them?"

"I did not mention the sum, Mr. Standish."

"Oh, I thought you did," returned Standish, rather confused.

"In fact, that has nothing to do with you."

"I thought it would give me an idea of the value of the papers."

"It is quite unnecessary that you should know their value."

"You wish me to get possession of them?"

"Yes."

"How much will it be worth to me?"

"That's another matter. That is something you do have a right to ask. Well, I am ready to pay"—Mr. Wentworth paused to consider—"I am ready to pay a hundred, yes, two hundred dollars for them."

Samuel Standish brightened up. To him in his present circumstances two hundred dollars was a great deal of money.

"Do you think there will be any chance to get hold of the papers on the boat?" he asked.

"I don't know."

"If not, I shall have to follow him."

"Yes."

"And I can't do it without money."

"I understand all that. Of course I would rather have you secure them on the boat, if possible, but it may not be possible."

"Have you anything to suggest then?"

"The boy and his companion will undoubtedly stop a few days in St. Louis. You must go to the same hotel, and try to get a room near by. As to the details I can't advise you. It is out of my line. I suspect that it may be in yours. Before you leave the boat, I shall give you some money so that you may be able to pay your hotel expenses."

"I ought to know your name, so that I may communicate with you."

"Yes, that is needful. Of course I rely upon your keeping secret and confidential all that has passed between us."

"You can rely upon me. I am the soul of honor!" said Samuel Standish, placing his hand on his heart.

"If you are," said Wentworth dryly, "I am afraid you are hardly the man for my purpose."

"I mean that I shall be loyal to you. I am a gentleman."

"I am glad to hear it. One thing more, you had better not be much in my company. It might excite suspicion. In two minutes I can give you such directions as you may require, and then we had better avoid each other."

"I understand."

As Gerald came out of his stateroom he saw the two walking together. It struck him as rather singular, but it did not occur to him that it boded harm to himself.

CHAPTER XXV.

A FALSE ALARM.

BRADLEY WENTWORTH had some slight hope that the words he had spoken would prejudice the English tourist against Gerald, but he was destined to be disappointed. The two promenaded the deck together, and were evidently on the most cordial terms.

"The boy is artful," thought Wentworth, "and for that reason he is the more dangerous. I wish he could happen to fall overboard. It would save me a great deal of anxiety, as he is the only one who is acquainted with the secret of my guilt."

The voyage proceeded. There are many rivers that are more interesting than the Mississippi. The shores are

low and monotonous, and the river itself in a large part of its course is turbid and narrow. There are but a few towns of much size or importance between Davenport and St. Louis.

"I say, Gerald," said Mr. Brooke, "we hear a good deal about American scenery, but if this is a specimen I can only say that it is a good deal overrated."

Gerald laughed.

"I haven't traveled a great deal myself, Mr. Brooke," he said, "but I think you must have seen something worthy of admiration since you have been in this country. Have you been up the Hudson river?"

"Not yet."

"Or seen Niagara?"

"Yes; I saw that. We haven't anything like that at home."

"I am told the Columbia River has some fine scenery."

"I wasn't in earnest, Gerald. It only occurred to me to joke you a little. You must admit, however, that there is nothing worth seeing here."

"We don't boast so much of our scenery as our men," said Gerald. "Samuel Standish, for instance."

"And Jake Amsden?"

"Yes."

"I think we can match them both in England. I wish we couldn't."

On the third evening, however, there was a genuine sensation.

Some one raised the cry of "Fire!" and for five minutes there was a grand commotion. Those who were in their staterooms rushed out in dismay, and there was much rushing to and fro and wild confusion.

Among those who ran out of their staterooms were Gerald and Noel Brooke, but both of them were calm and collected. The Englishman looked about him quickly, but could see no signs of fire.

"I believe it is a false alarm, Gerald."

At this moment one of the officers of the steamer passed by.

"Is there any fire?" asked Gerald.

"No; I should like to get hold of the miscreant who raised the cry. There is not the slightest indication of fire anywhere."

Satisfied by this assurance the two friends returned to their stateroom. As they reached the door which had been left open a man darted out.

"Hallo, there!" exclaimed Noel Brooke, seizing him. "What brings you in my stateroom?"

"Why, it's Standish!" exclaimed Gerald.

"I beg your pardon," said Samuel Standish apologetically. "I thought it was my room."

"That isn't very probable!" rejoined Brooke sternly.

"I assure you, Mr. Brooke, that it is the truth. I was so alarmed that I really did not know what I was about. I presumed the steamer was doomed, and wished to secure my small baggage, for I am a poor man and couldn't afford to lose it. Of course when I looked around me I saw that I was mistaken. I hope you will pardon me. Is the fire out?"

Excuse my agitation."

"There has never been any fire. Some scoundrel raised the alarm. If he should be found he would probably be thrown overboard by the indignant passengers."

"And serves him right, too!" said the virtuous Standish. "You have no idea what a shock he gave me. I am a victim of heart disease, and liable to drop at a minute's notice."

"I suppose you are ready to go?" said Brooke ironically.

"Well, no, I can't quite say that. Life is sweet, even if I am a poor man."

"Where is your stateroom?"

"On—the opposite side of the steamer."

"Then it seems rather strange that you should have mistaken ours for yours."

"So it is, so it is! I can't understand it at all, I give you my word. The sudden fright quite upset me. Didn't it upset you?"

"No."

"How I envy you! But it is no doubt the condition of my heart. Well, it is fortunate that the alarm was a false one."

Meanwhile the officers had been instituting an investigation as to the person who had raised the cry.

A typical Yankee, who looked as if he had recently come from New England, pointed to Standish and said, "I am positive that man raised the alarm."

There was an immediate commotion. Voices from the crowd of passengers called out: "Throw him into the river! Lynch him!"

Standish turned ghastly pale as he saw the menacing glances of those around him.

"I assure you, gentlemen," he protested, "this is a base calumny."

"Do you mean to tell me I lie?" demanded the Yankee fiercely.

"No, no, I beg your pardon. I only mean to say you are mistaken!"

"I don't think I am."

"Throw him into the river! There he will be safe from fire!" called out one man.

"Yes, yes, throw him into the river!" Samuel Standish was not a hero. Indeed, he was far from it. He seemed overcome with fear, and his knees smote with terror as a brawny cowboy seized him by the shoulder and hurried him towards the side.

"A ducking will do him no harm," said the cowboy, and he evidently voiced the sentiment of his fellow passengers.

"Gentlemen, friends!" exclaimed Standish, "I can't swim a stroke. Would you murder me?"

The position was critical. His appearance was against him, and had Gerald or his English friend mentioned the intrusion of Standish into their stateroom it would have been all up with him. But he found a friend just when he needed one most. Bradley Wentworth pushed his way through the crowd, and exclaimed angrily: "Let go that man! I won't permit this outrage."

"He raised the alarm of fire?"

"He did not! I was standing six feet from him when the cry was raised, and if it had been he I should have known it."

"But I heard him," insisted the Yankee.

"You are mistaken! I hope you will not compel me to use a harsher word. I appeal to the officers of this boat to prevent an outrage upon an unoffending man."

Bradley Wentworth was handsomely dressed, and looked to be a man of wealth and standing, and his testimony had great weight. The Yankee was poorly dressed, and from all appearances a laboring man. The fickle crowd changed at once, and such cries were heard as "It's a shame!" "It's an outrage!" Samuel Standish was released. The tide had turned and he was safe.

"Sir," he said, turning to Bradley Wentworth, "I thank you for your manly words. You have saved my life. You are a stranger to me, but hereafter I shall always remember you in my prayers."

"Thank you," answered Wentworth, "but I don't deserve your gratitude. What I have done has been in the interest of justice; for I feel no interest in you except as a man unjustly treated. I would have done as much for any of my fellow passengers."

These words created a very favorable impression, and completely cleared

Standish from suspicion, except in the minds of the Yankee passenger, Gerald and Noel Brooke.

"I believe Standish was the man," said Brooke when they were by themselves, and Mr. Wentworth's interference in his favor leads me to think there is something between them."

"But why should he give such an alarm?" asked Gerald puzzled.

"To get a chance to enter our stateroom."

"I don't quite understand why he should enter our stateroom rather than any other?"

"Gerald," said his friend significantly, "he was after your papers. He thought you might keep them in the stateroom."

"Do you really think that, Mr. Brooke?"

"I think it altogether likely, and that he has been engaged for the purpose by your friend, Mr. Bradley Wentworth. Unless I am greatly mistaken, we shall see more of Mr. Standish after we land."

"I believe you are right, Mr. Brooke," said Gerald thoughtfully. "I shall most certainly adopt your suggestion, and copy the papers as soon as I reach St. Louis."

The steamer arrived about three o'clock in the afternoon. Noel Brooke and Gerald went to the Lindell House and registered. An hour later, in the lobby of the hotel, looking, it must be confessed, rather out of place in his elegant surroundings, they recognized the familiar figure of Samuel Standish.

(To be continued.)

[This Story began in No. 453.]

NORMAN BROOKE;

OR,

BREASTING THE BREAKERS.

BY MATTHEW WHITE, JR.,

Author of "My Mysterious Fortune," "Eric Dane," etc.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A TERRIBLE CHARGE.

"OPEN in the name of the law!"

I repeated the words to myself, still half asleep, trying to attach some definite meaning to them. Could it be Cameron, trying to frighten me about having kidnaped a boy?

But no; the voice was much too deep, and now it called out again: "Are you there or not? I warn you the window is watched, so there is no escape for you that way."

Then the door knob was rattled fiercely, and several more heavy knocks were rained on the panels.

"Wait till I slip on a few clothes," I now made answer, tumbling out of bed and rushing uselessly from one side of the room to the other as we are so apt to do when excited and hurried.

This caused a cessation in the demands for admittance, but I could hear the murmur of several voices in excited conversation out in the hall.

"He's never done it," I heard some one say. "If he had what would he want to stay right here for, where he would be certain to be captured?"

"But the bottle in his pocket?" some one else put in. "Al Farrington found it there last night."

"How did he happen to be looking through this stranger's pockets?" another voice wanted to know.

"Why, it was while Brooke had his coat off doing one of his tricks," was the reply. "Boy like, Al was full of curiosity to find out all he could, and happening to knock against the pocket he felt the bottle inside. He took it out and saw chloroform on the label and—"

By this time I had made myself passably presentable, and eager to come forward with my defense, even before I

knew the charge, I flung open the door and exclaimed: "I can easily account for the presence of that bottle in my pocket. What has happened?"

Two rather frightened looking men at once stepped forward and placed their hands on my shoulders, while a lady who had been pointed out to me as the proprietor of the hotel, began to sob hysterically.

"Won't some one tell me what all this means?" I demanded again, regaining my own composure as I noticed the others losing theirs.

"Hush, don't speak so loud," one of the men who had me by the shoulder muttered. "There's a dead man in there," with a glance towards the room adjoining mine. Then he added significantly: "You ought to know that."

I came to a sudden halt, for we had begun to move off down the corridor toward the stairway.

"Look here," I said firmly, "I believe you are charging me with having committed murder. Isn't that so?"

For a second no one spoke, the landlady's sobs took a fresh impetus, and in the dim light that filtered through the transoms it seemed to me that the faces of the entire party grew a shade paler.

"That's just about the size of it, young feller," one of the men who held me finally made response. "One of the boarders, who left word to be called for the early train, was found dead in his bed, and the doctor says as how he was chloroformed."

"And just because I happened to have a bottle of the stuff in my pocket you charge me with the crime."

The whole thing seemed so utterly absurd that as yet I did not even feel nervous. Indeed it seemed to me that the others were far more terrified than I was. But then I suppose that was quite natural; I knew that I was not a murderer, while they verily believed that there was such a fiend in their very midst.

By this time we had reached the lower floor and

"Where shall we take him, ma'am?" inquired one of my captors of the weeping landlady.

"Oh, I don't know—this is terrible, terrible," was all the reply they could get out of her.

"Then I guess we'd better take him off at once to Caldwell," went on the man.

But to this I had something to say.

"Will you kindly tell me," I began, "what motive I had in killing this man? Was there any of his money missing?"

"No, I believe not," replied the fellow who did most of the talking. We were standing in the hotel office, and the guests who were already up had begun to collect in the various doorways that opened on it to stare at me with peculiar expressions on their faces. "But if you didn't do it, who did?" the man persisted. "You had the stuff to do it with in your pocket, and your room was right next to his. We found his door unlocked, you know."

"But the motive?" I went on. "What object could I have? You say none of his valuables were missing."

"He might have been some enemy of yours—a man you had a grudge against?" the fellow suggested.

"And you think I came up here with a bottle of chloroform in my pocket expressly to put him out of the way? And then went to sleep, leaving the bottle still there, for here it is."

I put my hand in my side pocket and held it up. Two ladies who had been looking in from one of the piazza windows screamed and hurried away.

The whole thing seemed utterly ridiculous. I even forgot that there was a man dead in the house, and laughed as I went on:

"This was bought to kill a cat with in New York. I did that deadly deed, I admit, and have carried the bottle about with me since, forgetting it was there. And now I want to know why it is not more reasonable to suppose that the man up stairs killed himself than that I killed him."

"Because there is no trace of the bottle from which he took the stuff in his room."

This reply made me look at affairs in a more serious light. The doctor had satisfied himself that the man had died from a dose of chloroform, it was evident that he had not committed suicide, and a half empty bottle of the fatal fluid had been found in my pocket. I was not going to have such an easy time in proving the charge an absurdity, as I had anticipated. My strength—strength which excitement and indignation had given me—now seemed to leave me all at once.

I looked around for a chair, fearful all the time lest the change in my manner might be taken for guilt. I found a seat and backed up to drop into it, still with those two men beside me.

I wondered if any breakfast was to be given to me. I felt faint and, was afraid to look at my hands lest I might observe a trembling in them. An entire reaction had set in.

In proportion as my composure forsook me, the landlady seemed to regain hers.

"You poor boy," she said now, coming over to me, "I don't believe you ever did such a terrible thing. Come, now, and get some breakfast. I am sure you will think of a way to prove how you came by that bottle."

This unexpected bit of kindness almost unnerved me. I thanked her, and then we all went into the dining room, my captors of course taking a seat on either side of me.

While I was eating my oatmeal and trying to decide what steps I had better take, I felt two hands placed on my shoulders, and then a brown head was thrust down very close to mine.

"Oh, Mr. Brooke," Al Farrington half sobbed out. "I hope you don't think it is all my fault. And yet it must have been. If I hadn't wanted to know so much I wouldn't have looked in your pocket, and then I told two or three people what I found, and asked them what use it could be to you. And—and so everybody knew this morning, and I feel dreadfully about it. And papa wants to know if he can be of any use. He's a lawyer, you know."

"Don't blame yourself that way, Al," I said, turning around to take his hand. "If you'll only believe in me that will be worth everything."

"Oh, I do, I do," replied the boy. "And I'm sure papa does. I'll run and tell him now to come in here and talk to you."

CHAPTER XXXII.

I AM HELD PRISONER.

I wondered if any objection would be made to my having an interview with Mr. Farrington. But the people who had taken possession of my person reminded me strongly of the traditional man with the white elephant—they evidently did not quite know what to do with me, and seemed rather relieved whenever I expressed a wish of any sort.

So now when Al's father appeared, one of my captors kindly got up and offered him his seat. He himself drew a chair out from under the adjoining table and planted himself in it directly behind me.

"Brooke, my lad, this is a terrible business," began the lawyer.

His tone was very kindly, but what did me more good than anything else

was the close pressure he gave my hand. I had had a little talk with him the evening previous before beginning the exhibition. He knew Lynnhurst very well, and the fact established a sort of tie between us at once.

"It is very mysterious," I replied, and then I told in detail how I came into possession of that bottle of chloroform. "You see I was afraid to throw it away," I added, "for fear some one might pick it up who couldn't tell what it was, and do himself some damage. And now see what has come of it!"

"How you came by the bottle does not signify so much now," said Mr. Farrington, "as does proving that Mr. Tretbar was killed by some one else, or by himself. You cannot prove that you did not leave your room during the night, I suppose?"

"I have nothing for it but my word," I answered. "Can't something be found out about this Mr. Tretbar himself? Whether he had anything on his mind, was troubled by something that might induce him to take his life?"

"It seems that nobody here ever saw or heard of him till last night when he came and asked for a room," was the reply. "I believe they have discovered in his pockets some letters from people in New York, to whom they have telegraphed. When they are heard from something definite may be learned."

"Then all I can do is to wait, I suppose," I said with a little sigh.

I had finished my breakfast, and now looked inquiringly at the man on my right. He in turn glanced at Mrs. Gunter, the landlady, who said, just as if he had spoken: "Oh, yes, the room at the end of the hall on the second floor."

We all rose and Mr. Farrington looked at his watch.

"I have just time to catch my train," he said. "You will not be taken to—that is, you will be kept here until a reply is received from this Tretbar's friends. Meantime my two boys are working hard to find some clew that will prove him a suicide. Remember that we believe in you and will stick by you. I shall see you again tonight. Good by," and once more he gave me his hand.

We were just leaving the office when Cameron appeared in the doorway. Archie was not with him, and on catching sight of me he hurried over to shake hands.

"I don't know what you must have thought of me, Brooke," he began, "for not turning up to report last night. But I couldn't get away. That was Archie's father at the Schlessingers'; his name is Boyd, Archie Boyd. That's just what the youngster said, and we took it for 'boy.' Well, he was hurt so that he didn't miss the child until after he was brought out here, and you can imagine how glad he was to see us. Our friends next door found out about things, so we got in easily enough. And then they wouldn't let me come away; said I must stay and be companion to Archie, who wouldn't go to anybody else except his father, and he was in bed. They want me to spend the day, and I want you to go back with me."

Cameron had talked rapidly, for he had a good many things to tell me. But now as he paused he appeared to notice for the first time the presence of the two guards, who stood patiently through it all close beside me.

Cameron turned on them a look of the strangest compound of wonder and disapproval, ending up with one directed at me which seemed to say: "If these fellows who stick by you so closely are your friends, why on earth don't you introduce them?"

There was only one thing for me to do. Take the cold plunge at once and have it over with.

"I can't go with you, Cameron," I said. "I am under arrest."

"Arrest!" He repeated the word, as if trying thus to comprehend better its meaning. Then he began to laugh, as he added: "Oh, come now. It's morning. You needn't think you can work your magical arts on me. Why—"

He stopped suddenly, convinced by the expression of my face that I was in earnest. He came a step closer and threw one arm across my shoulder as he asked:

"Great Cæsar, Brooke, I believe you mean what you say. What is it for?"

"Murder," I said as softly as I could, but even then the awful word sounded to my ears as though it had been shouted from the housetops.

Cameron did not take his hand from my shoulder. I felt him start violently as his fingers took a tighter grip on my coat.

"Will you come up stairs with me?" I went on. "We are waiting here until we hear from the friends of the — the friends of Mr. Tretbar."

One of my guards kindly allowed Cameron to take his place beside me, he falling to the rear, and so we ascended the stairs and entered the room which had been set aside for me.

This was a pleasant corner apartment, containing besides the usual allowance of furniture, a wicker lounge, on which Cameron and I took seats. The door was locked by one of the guards, who pocketed the key and joined his companion by the window overlooking the lawn, where they each took out cigars and proceeded to make themselves comfortable.

"Now tell me all about it," said Cameron, "I can't seem to realize it yet."

Neither could I, for that matter. If I had I suppose it would not have been possible for me to sit there so calmly as I did.

I had just finished giving my account of the affair to Cameron when there came a rap on the door. One of the smokers hastened to open it and brought back a telegram, which he read aloud:

"Will arrive at Fairlea ten ten."

DUMONT TRETBAR.

"That must be the poor chap's brother, eh, Hodgkins?" was the reader's comment, and he passed the dispatch to his fellow guardsman, as though the latter might be able to make more out of the message if he had the handling of it.

"It must be his father, 's far's we know," answered Hodgkins, fishing in his pockets for a pair of black rimmed eyeglasses, through which he regarded the message critically. "He was a purty young fellow, you know."

"It's almost time this other one was here now," went on the first speaker, looking at a great open faced watch, which he had considerable difficulty in getting out of his pocket. "I say five minutes to ten. What have you?"

Then the two fell to bragging about their watches, while Cameron and I sat there, he trying to think of something hopeful to say to me, and I dully wondering if there was any harder trial yet in store for me.

My awful position had not as yet really frightened me. The very horror of it seemed to render me incapable of realizing that I was in danger of —, but as I say, my thoughts never went so far as that, and my pen refuses to do so now.

My present greatest longing was for freedom. It was a glorious day, and when I looked out of the window and saw the trees, and the shadows cast by the fleecy clouds on the grass, and remembered that but for that bottle of chloroform I might now be walking along the pleasant country roads with Cameron, I shivered.

I sat still till I could remain quiet no longer, then got up and began to pace back and forth.

"Don't make a prisoner of yourself for my sake," I said to Cameron, but the latter declared he would stay at any rate until this Dumont Tretbar arrived.

"And I wouldn't go then, Brooke," he added, "if I hadn't promised to come right back to look after the boy."

At this moment a stage drove up to the porch beneath, and I knew that a new phase in my experience was about to begin.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DUMONT TRETBAR.

IT seemed an age to me between the time that stage stopped at the door and the reappearance of Mr. Hodgkins with Dumont Tretbar. The latter, instead of the tall, spare, grave looking gentleman my fancy had conjured up, proved to be a jaunty young man in a loud check suit, a highly colored necktie, and a straw hat with a tremendously wide brim and a white band.

"Ahem, this, Mr. Tretbar," announced Mr. Hodgkins as they entered, "is the young man as I was telling you about."

I had resumed my seat on the sofa beside Cameron, and now the new comer walked straight up to the latter and exclaimed melodramatically: "Wretch, how can you hold up your head after such a direful deed?"

In spite of the grave nature of the whole affair I felt a strange inclination to laugh; and not only at the mistake of this dude in the object of his vituperation, but at his voice and manner. The former was high and shrill, like a child's, without any bass notes in it at all, and his gestures were on the pump handle order, as practiced by amateur orators in their early efforts at school.

"That's not him," put in Mr. Hodgkins, pulling the impetuous avenger by the sleeve. "Besides you oughtn't to talk that way. It ain't been proved yet that he killed him. Take a chair, sir, while we put a few questions to you."

But young Mr. Tretbar was far too excited to sit down.

"Proved?" he cried, pacing up and down the floor and waving his straw hat about in much the same fashion as the end man does his tambourine at the minstrels. "What more proof do we want than the bottle found in his pocket?"

Here he slapped his own pocket, rolled his eyes up to the ceiling and then ended up by fixing them on me with a glare that was no doubt intended to be baleful, but which was really ridiculous.

"But he says he didn't do it," here interposed the other guardian, who had all along seemed to be on my side.

"Of course he'd say so," blustered young Tretbar. "He doesn't want to be hanged. Nobody does. It doesn't feel a bit good," and he ran his finger around inside his collar suggestively. "My poor cousin, to think he should come to this!"

"Have you noticed anything strange in his actions lately?" inquired Mr. Hodgkins, assuming a judicial look as he planted a chair directly in Tretbar's path.

"Er—no, I can't say that I have," answered the latter, halting suddenly and looking a little queer.

"When did you see—the late lamented last?" went on the other, after pausing an instant to think of a suitable term for the deceased.

This question seemed a poser for Dumont. He changed from one foot to the other, twisted nervously the fringe of hair on his upper lip and finally answered: "I guess it must be all of sixteen years."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Hodgkins, almost springing from his chair.

We were all astonished at this an-

nouncement. Somehow it had seemed that the man who came down to claim the body must have been on intimate terms with the dead man. His manner at first had certainly led us to believe that such was the case.

"Is he married? Has he any nearer relatives than yourself?" inquired Hodgkins's companion.

"I—I don't know," replied the dude, who appeared to be gradually wilting. "I tell you I haven't seen or heard from him in about sixteen years, and then I was quite a small boy."

"But your card, with the address printed on it was found in his pocket," I ventured to interpose.

"My aunt must have given it to him when she went to Chicago, where he came from, and perhaps he was going to call on me. It was pretty yellow. When the dispatch came I thought I ought to represent the family, don't you know?"

I thought I saw through it now. Dumont Tretbar was a young swell, of limited brain and unlimited aspirations for notoriety. When the telegram arrived he thought he saw a splendid opportunity to figure in the papers and—

But here an appalling thought occurred to me. Of course the reporters would eagerly seize on this incident and write it up in lurid colors. My name would naturally figure prominently in all the accounts. What would Aunt Louise, what would Edna think when they read it?

What must they think in any case at not having heard from me in so long? In the haste with which I had left the La Farges' I had neglected to state where any letters that might come for me should be sent. I had been ill two weeks. What must be the state of mind of the people in Cincinnati at not having heard from me in that time? And now, if the first word they received about me was in the form of this newspaper report the shock would be awful.

A sort of trembling came over me, and I put my arm on Cameron's coat sleeve, feeling as if I must stay myself on something.

Meantime the two guardians of my person were interrogating young Tretbar, without much success, however. He seemed to be all froth and bluster, and was apparently quite incapable of doing any practical good in this sad emergency.

Finally he went out with Mr. Hodgkins, whereupon the other guardian, whose name I had by this time ascertained was Ferguson, moved his chair close over to the sofa and began: "Mr. Brooke, I can't believe you would do this awful thing, but the constable ain't here and Hodgkins and I have got to do our duty at keepin' you safe till he comes back."

"Where has he gone?" inquired Cameron.

"Gone off on the firemen's picnic to Coney Island," replied Mr. Ferguson, adding, as he scratched the back of his head in perplexity: "I don't see just how we're to get the straight of this. That young feller that come out here from town don't appear to be worth much."

"And you think it your duty to hold my friend till the constable comes back?" remarked Cameron.

"Sartin," was the prompt response. "That is, unless there's somethin' turns up in the meantime that shows the man upstairs killed himself or—" and he lowered his voice significantly—"p'int to the real one who did it."

At this moment there was a knock on the door. Mr. Ferguson went to open it, and admitted a bell boy bearing a tray containing two bottles of beer and a couple of glasses.

The boy gazed at me curiously while-

he was in the room, and when he had gone Mr. Ferguson opened one of the bottles, poured out two glasses of the stuff and held one towards me.

"Will you join me?" he said.

"No, thank you. I never drink it," I told him.

At once he turned to Cameron and repeated the invitation. A strange glitter came into the latter's eyes.

"Yes, thank you," he said, and left my side to take the proffered glass.

Until I saw him get up I had quite forgotten the incident of the Casino roof. Now it came back to me with startling distinctness.

If possible I must save this fellow who meant so well and did so ill, from another fall.

"Oh, Cameron," I called out quickly, "there is something you can do for me."

My exclamation was so sudden that both he and Mr. Ferguson turned to look at me. As soon as Cameron's eye caught mine, I saw that he understood.

"Thank you, Mr. Ferguson," he said, "but on second thought I will not take anything now. What is it, Brooke?" he added, when he reached my side.

"I won't keep you any longer," I told him. "You ought to go back and report to the Schlessingers at once. You can return later, and on your way will you please find one of the Farrington boys and tell him I should like to see him here for a few minutes? That is all."

He shook my hand, gave me a grateful look and hurried off without once glancing at the tempter in the shape of homely, bewildered Mr. Ferguson, who stood there with the glass in his hand, as if he did not quite know what to do with it. Before he had decided the door opened again to admit Mr. Hodgkins and Dumont Tretbar, both of whom seemed greatly excited.

(To be continued.)

WHEELING LIKE THE WIND.

A BICYCLE rider, Arthur Zimmerman by name, having ridden a half mile dash in the authenticated phenomenal time of 1 minute 6.45 seconds, the *New York Sun* discusses this and other wheeling records as compared with the achievements of the trotting horse. Referring to Zimmerman's record it says

One feature of his late exploit is the fact that it virtually equals the best time in which a half mile has been covered by a trotter when in competition with other trotters. This time, it is stated, was 1 minute 4.14 seconds, made by Nancy Hanks. In studying Zimmerman's record, time allowance must be made for 1.2 or 3 seconds always lost by a cyclist in consequence of the fact that bicycle races are from a standing start, while trotting races are from a flying start. Take 2.1-2.2 seconds from Zimmerman's 1 minute 6.45 seconds and the result virtually equals Nancy Hanks's time. Take three seconds and the result is a half second better. Zimmerman, however, is still far behind the best trotting time for the half mile, though virtually even with the best trotting time for the half made by one horse out of a field of starters.

The best time made in public by a trotter for a quarter mile is 30 seconds, which has been made by both Maud S. and Sunol. Sunol in a private trial has made 29.1-2 seconds. As Zimmerman and two others have made a flying quarter in 29.45 seconds at the Hartford tournament, the wheel is "in it" at a quarter mile with those magnificent trotters. Following is a table of records at the same distances in the two sports:

TROTTING.

Dis.	M. S.	Name.
1 mile	2 08 3-4	Maud S.
2 miles	4 43	Fanny Witherspoon
3 miles	7 21 1-4	Huntress
4 miles	10 2 1-2	Satellite
5 miles	13 00	Lady Mack.
6 miles	17 23 1-4	Controllor
7 miles	21 25	Captain McGowen

BICYCLING.

Dis.	M. S.	Name.
1 mile	2 16	W. C. Jones
2 miles	4 59 3-5	W. C. Jones
3 miles	7 38 1-5	W. C. Jones
4 miles	10 18 3-5	W. C. Jones
5 miles	12 54 2-5	W. C. Jones
6 miles	16 41 4-5	H. Parsons
7 miles	21 45 2-5	H. Parsons

That bicycling time is faster above three miles is perhaps explained by the fact that trotters rarely speed above one mile.

AUTUMN.

RED leaves, yellow leaves,
Stubble fields and garnered sheaves,
Brown bare reeds and swaying rushes,
Empty nests in leafless bushes,
Lonely swallows, silent thrushes,
Falling leaves, falling leaves,
Frosty mornings, chilly eves,
All proclaim our summer over,
Winter coming, Autumn here,
And she reigns in matchless power,
Stripping summer's leafy bower,
Reigns in fruit if not in flower,
As a matron she draws near;
Purple, crimson, yellow spraying,
Variegated colors playing
In the woodland festooned masses,
On the meadows frosted grasses,
Falling leaves, falling leaves;
Crimson blotches on the green,
Summer's life blood flowing, flowing,
And the forest gayly glowing
With the leaves, Autumn leaves,
Rustling when the breezes blowing,
Send them scudding, circling, snowing
Purple, crimson, yellow leaves;
Winter coming, summer going,
Autumn reigning, blushing, glowing
As a matron, wise and knowing,
Filling barn, though stripping bower,
Queen of fruit, if not of flower,
Glorious in ripened power
And the fullness of the year!

—Philadelphia Ledger.

Reading and Declamation.

BY JUDSON NEWMAN SMITH.

THE boys at school used to dislike the weekly declamation. They did not see the use of it, in the first place—but then, some of them did not see the use of arithmetic. Besides, it was embarrassing to make a show of one's self in a way that seemed ridiculous. Now the ability to declaim well is, on the contrary, very useful to man as well as boy, and a boy's declamation is ridiculous only when he allows it to be so. Young fellows like to make sport of everything, and when Master Jones steps up to recite, a titter of course runs around the room. But when Master Jones has spoken half a dozen words with dignity and force there will not be a roving eye in the classroom. Master Jones has been careful and intelligent in his preparation; he has made a success and won the admiration of his fellows; when the public exercises come around, he will be chosen to declaim before the admiring parents and friends.

The principal usefulness of declamatory training to the ordinary person is that it gives ease and repose before an audience, admitting of a state of mind wherein one can collect his thoughts. Every man is at times called upon to say a few words in public; if he has not been accustomed to facing an audience, he will blush and stammer, though he only has to say, "Gentlemen, I thank you!"

While one is inexperienced, it is better to give readings instead of declamations. The memory is then not burdened, and the mind can devote its whole attention to the enunciation, the emphasis and the expression. You must be able to read aloud well before you can declaim well, and it is safe to say there are few good readers. Indeed not every one knows of what good reading consists. That was most vividly illustrated in a literary society consisting of young fellows.

One, who was slated for a reading, surprised his hearers by choosing for his unique effort a few verses from the Bible. Most every one had, at some time, studied these by heart, but few, if any, had appreciated the real depth of feeling—the anguish and the horror and the piteousness that those few verses depict; but, when the reader with a faint voice full of the suggestion of tears, pronounced the last words, not a listener moved, so strong was the spell, and every eye was glistening.

Good reading involves several import-

ant things: deliberation; distinctness in the sounding of every consonant; and expression above all. Expression means the full development of all the fine shades of meaning as well as its heavy colors, and it is accomplished by pausing, hastening, emphasis, and rising, lowering and modulating the voice.

The primary rule for expression is to give each word its proper value with regard to all the others.

Take, for instance, a sentence from the selection referred to, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" When properly read, the first word has fully three times the value of the second; by prolonging or dragging it over three times the interval that the other words fill, the reader will approach the full expression of the agonized pleading that should be conveyed. The effect is further accomplished by giving the second syllable of "forsaken" twice the value of the others.

The punctuation of a sentence should be strictly observed; its function is twofold—to give time for breath and to make clear the sense; but punctuation does not supply all the pauses for the perfect reader; he will see that the force of an important word can be increased, the idea made more vivid and the sense delicately shaded by an almost imperceptible pause after that word.

The modulation of the voice is mighty for expression, and good training with intelligence will open up new force and suggestion entirely hidden to the slipshod reader. The student who is anxious and intelligent will, before studying a selection, read it, sentence by sentence, several times, until the full sense and force of each is mastered. He will then throw himself heartily into the spirit of the composition, and in reading it aloud endeavor to give full play to all the emotions it contains.

There is always room for good reading no matter what the thing read—whether a newspaper paragraph or a poem, and after careful training in reading aloud a habit is formed of doing justice to all that the eye peruses, with the result of a full comprehension and a keener enjoyment when reading to one's self. Being able to read well, one is well prepared to become a good declaimer.

Declamation is reading, without a book or manuscript and with gestures and other action. The novice is invariably awkward. This is because he is stiff; he holds the muscles of his body and limbs rigid and moves them with constraint. The secret of grace is ease. On the platform one should stand erect but at rest; and when gesturing, a motion should be made, not with that spasmodic haste that comes from nervous constraint, but with a deliberateness that gives time to think the gesture out as it is made.

A veteran actor recently told the writer two facts about acting on the stage, that apply to declamation. First he said that even among old professionals, before thorough familiarity with the business of a new play, the feeling of having tremendous hands and legs was an inseparable sensation; it would seem to the actor as if his feet and hands were every moment getting in his way. Mind you, even with professionals! We have all felt this when we faced an audience; and only frequent rehearsal and entire familiarity will do away with it.

The other point was that, of all acting, the hardest thing was, not to act; to stand, to listen, while another character is telling you a story is painful to a degree, says the informant; it is a relief when one finally has a line to speak and gains the freedom of full action. This paradox is demonstrated every time a boy throws himself heartily into

his declamation; at first, during the introductory sentences, he will feel constrained and awkward, but when he has, with the courage of despair, thrown himself into the whirlpool of gesture, the action at once loosens the bonds, and a feeling of surprise is felt at the greater ease and confidence that is experienced immediately.

As to graceful gesture, constraint again mars the performance. Too often, a hand is raised to the height of the chest when it should, like Mulberry Sellers's, go as high as if it were reaching out for the heavens; the timid little movement, meant to express a grand sentiment perhaps, is ridiculous and somebody is sure to laugh. Every gesture should be generous, with a free sweep; and a most important general rule for grace is, that every movement of the arm should be in the arc of a circle. For instance, if one is to point straight out from the right shoulder and toward the right, the motion of the hand would be from the point of repose at the right hip in an easy sweep up to the left breast, to the chin and out to the straight arm position. The first impulse of the novice would be to raise his hand and arm from his side without bending and with the motion of a pump handle. This is stiff and awkward, the other, free and graceful.

Declamation is one of the branches of oratory, but it should not be confounded with that noble art, which is a union of noble thought, adequately expressed in declamation of the highest order. Whether or not you can be an orator, depends; orators, like poets, are born, not made; but declamatory expertness is necessary to oratory, and he who has an ambition to move hearts and sway minds from the rostrum can lay the necessary foundation by perfecting his reading and his declamation.



W. P. R., New Britain, Conn. The stories mentioned may possibly be published in book form.

W. F. P., New York City. We assume that our readers are gentlemen.

R. S., New York City. By addressing the *American Angler*, New York City, you can get the information you desire.

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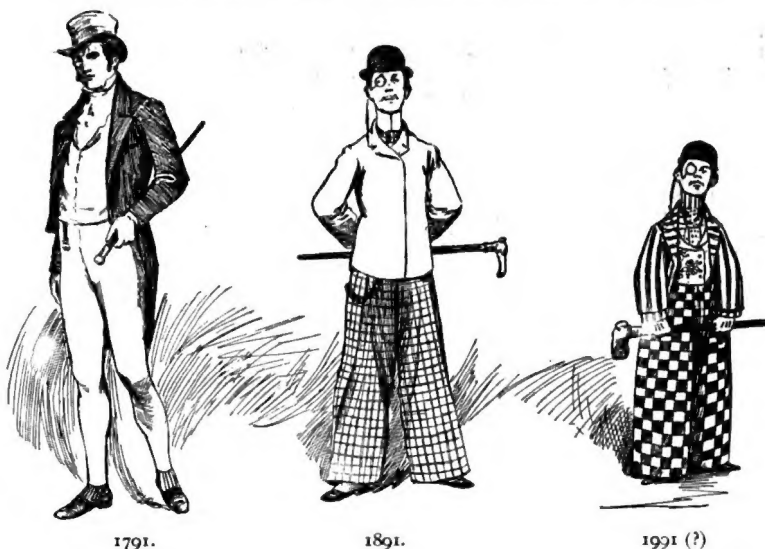
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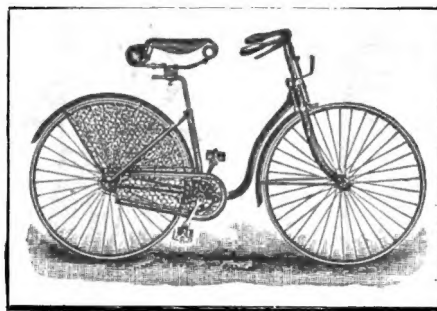
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